



Royal Apologetic in the Ancient Near East

Andrew Knapp



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ROYAL APOLOGETIC IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST



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by
Andrew Knapp

Atlanta, Georgia
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For my parents, John and Karen

Who shall tell what may be the effect of writing? If it happens to have been cut in stone, though it lie face down-most for ages on a forsaken beach, or “rest quietly under the drums and tramlings of many conquests,” it may end by letting us into the secret of usurpations and other scandals gossiped about long empires ago:—this world being apparently a huge whispering-gallery. Such conditions are often minutely represented in our petty lifetimes. As the stone which has been kicked by generations of clowns may come by curious little links of effect under the eyes of a scholar, through whose labors it may at last fix the date of invasions and unlock religions, so a bit of ink and paper which has long been an innocent wrapping or stop-gap may at last be laid open under the one pair of eyes which have knowledge enough to turn it into the opening of a catastrophe.

George Eliot, *Middlemarch*

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I first began to struggle with Samuel while a master's student at Notre Dame. As I read through the text, I repeatedly questioned not only why certain passages were preserved in the Hebrew Bible, but why they were composed at all. I raised this issue with one of my professors, who suggested that I read Kyle McCarter's article, "The Apology of David" (McCarter 1980b). I did so, and הנה! Everything suddenly made sense. It was not coincidence that two years later I had enrolled at Johns Hopkins with McCarter as my primary advisor. At the time, though, I had no thought of making apologetic the subject of my dissertation. That idea developed only gradually, with the help of the "Hopkins system." I can point to two specific events that solidified this idea with me.

First, during an epigraphy course the Tel Dan Inscription captured my attention. As I read and reread the brief, broken text, it occurred to me that we see in it some of the same legitimizing rhetoric that appears in the David narrative, albeit in a much different form. This became my first clue that the insistence by many scholars on connecting apologetic with a certain form is questionable.

Second, heedless of the condemnation of Oholah, throughout graduate school I had become increasingly infatuated with the Assyrians. This was driven not by my love for their "warriors clothed in blue," or their idols, but chicken scratch (that is, cuneiform). This led me to work for the Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period (RINAP) project, which meant that during the time when I needed to select a dissertation topic, Esarhaddon greeted me every morning. Again I perceived the same defensive rhetoric, this time in the introduction to his Nineveh A inscription. I now recognized that from all corners of the ancient Near East, rulers who ascended to the throne in atypical ways resorted to the same type of rhetoric to justify themselves. When I realized that no comprehensive examination of this idea had yet been done, this study was born.

This book is a revised version of my 2012 dissertation, the genesis of which was just described. The opening chapters have undergone significant modification as the result of some insightful and constructive peer review. The specific text analyses have received various degrees of attention in the intervening years; my understanding of the Tel Dan Inscription has noticeably evolved, and I have refined the discussion of Esarhaddon, David, and Solomon especially in light of further work.

Innumerable people deserve my thanks for helping me make it to this stage. My *Doktorvater*, Kyle McCarter, dedicated much time and effort to assisting me from the inchoate idea of the project through the finished work. During the dissertation phase, I received kind feedback along the way from my other readers as

well: Ted Lewis, Theo van den Hout, Jacob Lauinger, and Richard Kagan. Outside of my committee, Jamie Novotny generously read and responded to a draft of my Esarhaddon chapter. Jeremy Hutton's work served as an inspiration, and he gave excellent input in the final stages of the project, saving me from numerous embarrassments. I am also indebted to Paul Delnero, my Akkadian teacher. Several colleagues at Johns Hopkins also contributed in sundry ways: Michael Simone, Erin Fleming, Chris Brinker, Meredith Fraser, and Heather Parker all deserve credit. Heath Dewrell merits special mention for patiently enduring countless requests for input and for providing necessary, and occasionally unnecessary, distractions.

I am grateful to everyone at SBL Press, especially Billie Jean Collins, Nicole Tilford, and Kathie Klein for facilitating the publication of this work, to Amélie Kuhrt for accepting it into the Writings from the Ancient World Supplement series, and to my anonymous peer reviewers for providing valuable comments on the manuscript.

As this is my first book, I also want to thank briefly those teachers who assisted my professional development prior to my arrival at Johns Hopkins. I had the privilege of studying with the Bible faculty at Seattle Pacific University, including Rob Wall, Jack Levison, Frank Spina, and Eugene Lemcio, all of whom inspired my critical study and demonstrated teaching excellence. At Notre Dame I encountered new, engaging professors who continued my biblical training, specifically Jim VanderKam and Eugene Ulrich. I also was able to indulge my passion for the study of the ancient Near East during those years through my study with Avi Winitzer and Paul-Alain Beaulieu, the latter of whom not only introduced me to the study of Mesopotamia several years ago but also gave informed responses to several queries as I prepared my Nabonidus chapter. All of the aforementioned teachers have set a standard for wisdom and character that I hope to emulate.

Finally, my family has provided incredible support throughout the process. My in-laws, Stuart and Celeste Lamar, have aided in various ways, most tangibly with child care. My brothers, Ethan and Eli, and their respective families have encouraged me; Ethan warrants special credit for supplying me with a place to stay and transportation during forays to Israel. My parents, John and Karen, are ultimately responsible for this project (whether that is a compliment or not). They raised me in a loving home and instilled in me a love of learning in general and the Bible in particular. They have supported me throughout every stage of my education and encouraged me to seek the truth, even when I arrive at different conclusions than they. My children, Evangeline and Malachi, are a continual source of both inspiration and comedy. (Evangeline is currently learning about the phenomenon of "apowogetic" from such venues as the marvelous *True Story of the Three Little Pigs*; my thanks to Jon Scieszka for this.) And, of course, I cannot adequately thank my nonpareil wife, Kandace.

God elected me to write this volume in order to redress the many failings of my unworthy scholarly predecessors; any shortcomings in this book are not my doing but a vestige of prior failure done by academics who forsook divine will and

trusted “in their own overweening deeds” (cf. 2 Sam 21, though I quote Esarhad-don’s Nineveh A)—or at least, it seems appropriate to offer such a disclaimer, given my subject matter. The unfortunate reality, however, is that this book’s deficiencies are a testament to the fact that teachers are refiners, not alchemists; they can improve their material and remove some imperfections, but they cannot transform dross into gold. All errors are my own.

ABBREVIATIONS

Journal and Series Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>
ABOT	<i>Ankara Arkeoloji Müzesinde bulunan Boğazköy tabletleri: Boğazköy-Tafeln im Archäologischen Museum zu Ankara</i>
ADPV	Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins
AfO	<i>Archiv für Orientforschung</i>
AfOB	Archiv für Orientforschung; Beihefte
AMI	<i>Archaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran</i>
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
ANET	<i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament</i> (3rd ed.)
AnOr	Analecta Orientalia
AnSt	<i>Anatolian Studies</i>
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AoF	<i>Altorientalische Forschungen</i>
AS	Assyriological Studies
ASM	Asian Studies Monographs
ATD	Alte Testament Deutsch
ATDan	Acta theologica danica
BA	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BARSup	British Archaeological Reports Supplements
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BCSMS	<i>Bulletin of the Canadian Society for Mesopotamian Studies</i>
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium
BibEnc	Biblical Encyclopedia
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BN	<i>Biblische Notizen</i>
BiOr	<i>Bibliotheca Orientalis</i>
BoTU	Boghazköi-Texte in Umschrift
BSfP	<i>Bulletin de la Société française de Philosophie</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CAD	<i>The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</i>
CAH	<i>The Cambridge Ancient History</i>

CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CHANE	Culture and History of the Ancient Near East
CHD	<i>The Hittite Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</i>
CHM	<i>Cahiers d'histoire mondiale</i>
CIS	Copenhagen International Seminar
ConBOT	Coniectanea biblica: Old Testament Series
COS	<i>The Context of Scripture</i>
CQ	<i>Communication Quarterly</i>
CR	<i>Communication Reports</i>
CS	<i>Communication Studies</i>
CSSJ	<i>Central States Speech Journal</i>
CTL	<i>Current Trends in Linguistics</i>
DMOA	Documenta et monumenta Orientis antiqui
<i>Eothen</i>	<i>Eothen: Collana di studi sulle civiltà dell'Oriente antico</i>
ETL	<i>Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses</i>
EVO	<i>Egitto e Vicino Oriente</i>
FAT, 2	Forschungen zum Alten Testament, 2 Reihe
FW	Fischer Weltgeschichte
GAG	<i>Grundriss der akkadischen Grammatik</i>
GBS	Guides to Biblical Scholarship
GHL	<i>A Grammar of the Hittite Language</i>
GorDiss	Gorgias Dissertations
GTS	<i>Glyph: Textual Studies</i>
HbAw	Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft
HBS	Herders Biblische Studien
HdO	Handbuch der Orientalistik
HED	<i>Hittite Etymological Dictionary</i>
HHw	<i>Hethitisches Handwörterbuch: Mit dem Wortschatz der Nachbarsprachen</i>
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HST	<i>The Ancient Near East: Historical Sources in Translation</i>
HTIBS	Historical Texts and Interpreters in Biblical Scholarship
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
HUCA	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
HZL	<i>Hethitisches Zeichenlexikon: Inventar und Interpretation der Keilschriftzeichen aus den Boğazköy-Texten</i>
IBC	Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
IBoT	<i>Istanbul Arkeoloji Müzelerinde bulunan Bogazköy tabletleri</i>
IBS	Innsbrucker Beiträge zum Sprachwissenschaft
IEJ	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>

<i>IF</i>	<i>Indogermanische Forschungen</i>
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>IstMitt</i>	<i>Istanbuler Mitteilungen</i>
JANESCU	<i>Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University</i>
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JCR	<i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i>
JCS	<i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i>
JEOL	<i>Jaarbericht van het Vooraziatisch-Egyptisch Gezelschap (Genootschap) Ex oriente lux</i>
JESHO	<i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>
JHebS	<i>Journal of Hebrew Scriptures</i>
JQR	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
JSOT	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series</i>
JSS	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
JSSEA	<i>Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities</i>
KAI	<i>Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften (2nd ed.)</i>
KBo	<i>Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköi</i>
Klio	<i>Klio: Beiträge zur alten Geschichte</i>
KUB	<i>Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazköi</i>
LANE	<i>Languages of the Ancient Near East</i>
LHBOTS	<i>Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies</i>
MAPS	<i>Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society</i>
MDOG	<i>Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft</i>
MesCiv	<i>Mesopotamian Civilizations</i>
MHEOP	<i>Mesopotamian History and Environment Occasional Publications</i>
MVAG	<i>Mitteilungen der Vorderasiatisch-ägyptischen Gesellschaft</i>
NABU	<i>Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires</i>
NEA	<i>Near Eastern Archaeology</i>
NEASB	<i>Near East Archaeological Society Bulletin</i>
NIBCOT	<i>New International Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament</i>
OBO	<i>Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis</i>
OES	<i>Oriental Explorations and Studies</i>
OIP	<i>Oriental Institute Publications</i>
OLA	<i>Orientalia lovaniensia analecta</i>
<i>Or</i>	<i>Orientalia</i>
OTL	<i>Old Testament Library</i>
PBA	<i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i>

PEANES	Publications in Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies
PEQ	<i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i>
PNA	<i>The Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire</i>
PR	<i>Philosophy and Rhetoric</i>
PRR	<i>Public Relations Review</i>
Qad	<i>Qadmoniot</i>
QJS	<i>Quarterly Journal of Speech</i>
RA	<i>Revue d'assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale</i>
RAI	Rencontre assyriologique internationale
RB	<i>Revue Biblique</i>
RBECs	<i>Reviews of Biblical and Early Christian Studies</i>
RBL	<i>Review of Biblical Literature</i>
RGRC	Reference Guides to Rhetoric and Composition
RGTC	Répertoire Géographique des Textes Cunéiformes
RIMA	The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods. 3 vols. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1987–1996
RINAP	The Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period. Wino- na Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011–
RIA	<i>Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäol- ogie</i> . Berlin: de Gruyter.
RRBS	Recent Research in Biblical Studies
RS	Rhetoric and Society
Rtrav	Recueil de travaux relatifs à la philologie à l'archéologie égyptiennes et assyriennes, pour servir de bulletin à la mis- sion française du Caire
SAA	State Archives of Assyria
SAAB	<i>State Archives of Assyria Bulletin</i>
SAAS	State Archives of Assyria Studies
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SBTS	Sources for Biblical and Theological Study
ScrHier	Scripta hierosolymitana
SEÅ	<i>Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok</i>
SGKAO	Schriften zur Geschichte und Kultur des alten Orients
SHCANE	Studies in the History and Culture of the Ancient Near East
SJOT	<i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>
SMAL	Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology and Literature
SMEA	<i>Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici</i>
SSCJ	<i>The Southern Speech Communication Journal</i>
SSU	Studia Semitica Uppsaliensia
StBoT	Studien zu den Boğazköy-Texten
StBoTB	Studien zu den Boğazköy-Texten Beihefte
StudOr	Studia Orientalia

TAPS	Transactions of the American Philosophical Society
TCS	Texts from Cuneiform Sources
THeth	Texte der Hethiter
TLD	Trends in Linguistics Documentation
TSTS	Toronto Semitic Texts and Studies
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
UF	<i>Ugarit-Forschungen</i>
VAB	Vorderasiatische Bibliothek
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Supplements to <i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VW	Verständliche Wissenschaft
WAW	Writings from the Ancient World
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WDWLS	William Dwight Whitney Linguistic Series
WJC	<i>Western Journal of Communication</i>
WO	<i>Die Welt des Orients</i>
WVDOG	Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft
WZKM	<i>Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes</i>
YNER	Yale Near Eastern Researches
YOSR	Yale Oriental Series, Researches
ZA	<i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie</i>
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZDPV	<i>Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins</i>
ZVS	<i>Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung auf dem Gebiet der indogermanischen Sprachen</i>

General

BH	Biblical Hebrew
BM	British Museum
ca.	circa
ch(s).	chapter(s)
DB	Bisitun inscription of Darius
ed.	edition / editor
esp.	especially
GN	Geographic Name
HDR	History of David's Rise
lit.	literally
l(l).	line(s)
LXX	Septuagint
LXX ^B	Codex Vaticanus
MT	Masoretic Text

n(n).	footnote(s)
OG	Old Greek
pl(s).	plate(s)
PN	Personal Name
rev.	revised
RN	Royal Name
SN	Succession Narrative
TDRR	Traditions of David's Rise and Reign
v(v).	verse(s)
vol(s).	volume(s)
XPf	Persepolis F inscription of Xerxes

INTRODUCTION

APOLOGY AS A DESIGNATION OF ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN TEXT

EIGHTY YEARS AGO, Edgar Sturtevant and George Bechtel published *A Hittite Chrestomathy*, intended as a workbook for burgeoning Hittite students (Sturtevant and Bechtel 1935, 5). The chrestomathy featured five major Hittite works, one of which the authors dubbed “The Apology of Hattusilis.” But what did they mean by *apology*?

Apology originated as a legal term. In the classical Greek world, one’s defense in court was an ἀπολογία. The most famous illustration of this is Plato’s *Apology*, wherein he provides a version of Socrates’s speech defending himself before the Athenian jury that eventually sentenced him to death. Other examples also survive from ancient Greece, with the common characteristic of defense against specific accusations in a judicial setting. In Late Antiquity the term was clothed with theological garb. Drawing from this idea of self-defense, various Christian epistles exhorted the faithful to justify their belief: “Be ever ready to provide a defense (ἀπολογία) to everyone who asks you the reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear” (1 Pet 3:15). In the early church, apologists such as Justin Martyr took this exhortation a step further, composing treatises defending the Christian faith. Today, when encountering the term apologetic, many default to this idea of theological defense—Christian apologetics in particular remains a popular literary genre, as contemporary theologians continue to argue for the rational basis of their beliefs through apologies (though perhaps with a slightly different exigence than Justin Martyr, who implored Antoninus Pius to halt the persecution of Christians).¹ Among those in the communications field, meanwhile, apology has garnered political connotations in recent decades. Apologies are discourses presented to repair one’s reputation in response to attacks on one’s character. This is seen most frequently among political figures who must acknowl-

1. Within the last five years alone, the following new books (or new editions of earlier books) have been published: Douglas Groothuis’s *Christian Apologetics: A Comprehensive Case for Biblical Faith*; Mark Mittelberg and Lee Strobel’s *The Questions Christians Hope No One Will Ask (with Answers)*; Michael R. Licona and William A. Dembski’s *Evidence for God: 50 Arguments for Faith from the Bible, History, Philosophy, and Science*; William Lane Craig’s *On Guard: Defending Your Faith with Reason and Precision*; *The Apologetics Study Bible*; and more.

edge something incriminating. Since apologetic in this vein is divorced from the legal sphere, it allows for various strategies, including denial, justification, pleading for forgiveness, or others—apologetic of this nature has provided much fodder for scholars of rhetoric.

Historically, then, “apologetic” can refer to Socrates justifying himself before the Athenian jury, or to C. S. Lewis arguing for the rational basis of his faith, or to Richard Nixon explaining his role in the Watergate scandal—and an inquiry into the meaning of this term today would probably result in different answers if one were talking to a classicist, a theologian, or a public official. So where does “The Apology of Hattusili” fit here? Sturtevant and Bechtel never specified, considering the designation self-explanatory. And indeed, investigation of the matter leaves little doubt as to their meaning. The two Hittitologists clearly adopted the judicial meaning of apologetic from the classical world when they introduced the term into the field of ancient Near Eastern studies. Sturtevant was trained as a classicist before turning to Hittitology, and he envisioned a legal context for Hattusili’s text.² As the years passed, though, the title “Apology” stuck for Hattusili’s much-studied inscription, but the reason for this designation became increasingly obscure as scholars of the ancient Near East focused on the political nuances of the term.

In any event, while Sturtevant and Bechtel deserve credit for introducing the term “apologetic” into the field, it was Herbert Wolf who galvanized the study of ancient Near Eastern texts as apologetic discourse. Wolf was the first to consciously analyze Hattusili’s autobiography from an apologetic perspective, rather than just adopting the label without comment. In his 1967 dissertation, “The Apology of Hattusili Compared with Other Political Self-justifications of the Ancient Near East,” Wolf appealed to the apologetic nature of the Hittite text as part of a comparative study. Ultimately, he sought especially to understand the biblical narrative of David through this lens better. Wolf’s work sparked something of a chain reaction as in the ensuing decades several other scholars adopted the jargon of apologetic; during this time the identification and study of other texts from disparate areas of the ancient Near East as “apologies” became familiar and produced useful results. While these studies multiplied, though, nearly everyone agreed that certain texts were apologies, but few seemed to know or care much what an apology was. As a result, study of ancient Near Eastern apologies became rather muddled. Just a half century after the text was first styled “apology,” Van Seters disqualified Hattusili’s autobiography from being an apology on the grounds that “One thinks of an apology as implying a legal context with a fairly defined ‘jury’ and one’s status or life

2. “Such action [Hattusili’s deposal of his nephew and suzerain, Urhi-Tessup] was, to say the least, of doubtful legality in what was, after all, a limited monarchy, and it required justification before the *pankus*, the council of nobility, which we elsewhere call the senate. While the document before us is not ostensibly addressed to this body, it is hard to see what other purpose it could have had” (Sturtevant and Bechtel 1935, 84).

at stake” (1983, 119)—ironic given that such an understanding of the term was precisely how the text earned the designation in the first place.

The various understandings of apologetic in the field of ancient Near Eastern studies highlights the lack of any synthetic or theoretical treatment of the subject. The most recent monograph-length work dedicated to apologetic was Wolf’s dissertation in 1967; since then an array of other texts have been analyzed from an apologetic perspective, yielding many insights into the phenomenon.³ But only individual articles have appeared in the last forty-five years, and these in disparate places, making the topic difficult to approach with a comprehensive view. Moreover, no recent work has dealt with the broader phenomenon more than in passing; most contributions have only submitted a text for analysis as an apology by comparing it to one of the better-established examples. My objective for this book is to impose some order on the chaos of apologetic study in the ancient Near East.

In the first chapter I briefly trace the trajectory of scholarship regarding ancient Near Eastern apologetic, featuring the discrepancies in the understanding of this term and the need for a common starting point from which to commence future work. I try to provide this starting point by appealing to the field of rhetorical studies, in which apologetic is a common focus of study. Rhetoricians have demonstrated what unites the disparate uses of *apology*, namely, the situational similarity of the various contexts in which one encounters apologies. In the second chapter I examine the rhetoric of royal apologetic in the ancient Near East. Building on the foundation of apologetic as the discourse of defense, I survey the recurring ways in which various monarchs defended themselves against accusations of illegitimacy. After describing these common motifs, I present a number of texts that I consider to be apologies and select seven for in-depth analysis.

I perform these specific text studies in the following seven chapters. In each case I establish what we can know about the historical circumstances of the ruler, then introduce the specific apologetic text to be examined, then analyze the text from an apologetic perspective, and finish with a discussion about what this tells us about the motivation for composing the text. In the tenth chapter I provide a review of the textual analyses, viewing the texts in concert and providing a comprehensive look at the phenomenon of royal apologetic in the ancient Near East.

3. And, while I acknowledge my great debt to Wolf’s groundbreaking work on the subject, his dissertation is now extremely dated.

CHAPTER ONE

THE NATURE OF APOLOGETIC

1.1 PARALLEL PLAY

ONE CAN DETECT a sort of parallel play in the study of ancient Near Eastern apologetic over the last several decades.¹ The related fields of rhetorical study and genre theory have blossomed, with particular attention paid to apologetic; rhetoricians have helpfully described the contours and functions of apologies both historically and conceptually while genre theorists have illuminated what we can and cannot learn from studying apologetic as a genre. Meanwhile, there has been a proliferation of studies in which ancient Near Eastern apologies are studied *qua* apologies, drawing on the defensive rhetoric in certain royal inscriptions (and occasionally other types of text) to illuminate the texts' meanings. But there has been no dialogue between the scholars of the ancient Near East and those of rhetoric and genre. This is both inexcusable and regrettable: inexcusable because the theoretical treatments are readily accessible and not difficult to find; regrettable because, as I will show below, modern genre theory has much to offer those interested in ancient Near Eastern apologetic, and the lack of methodological rigor in several previous studies has led to flawed analysis. In the following, therefore, I will briefly sketch two parallel tracks. I will first survey studies of apologetic in the ancient Near East, highlighting three areas where an engagement with rhetorical scholarship could improve such work (§1.2). I will then explore those three areas, in each case discussing rhetorical work and then applying it to apologetic in the ancient Near East (§§1.3–1.5). In doing so I hope to lay a theoretical foundation not only for my own study of several apologies in chapters 3–9, but also for future works on the same subject.

1.2 APOLOGETIC IN ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN SCHOLARSHIP

In this section I survey some of the most important and pioneering secondary literature dealing with the phenomenon of apologetic in the ancient Near East. I will examine what texts were analyzed from an apologetic perspective and what conclusions were drawn about the phenomenon in the period subsequent to Sturte-

1. For those who have not had the joy of raising a toddler, parallel play is the phenomenon where children play alongside one another but without interacting.

vant and Bechtel's contribution, described in the introduction. I will focus on three particularly noteworthy articles (Hoffner 1975; McCarter 1980; Tadmor 1983) that influenced nearly all later studies of apologetic. I will refrain from assessment of the secondary literature here. I deal with these works from a theoretical and methodological standpoint in the following section, and I interact with their text-specific treatments *inter alia* in my discussions of the texts throughout the volume.

This survey comes with the caveat that I am restricting my focus here to works that deal with apologetic explicitly. This may seem somewhat arbitrary since innumerable scholars have focused on the concepts of self-justification and legitimacy without using the label "apology." But my purpose here is to highlight not only how certain texts have been illuminated by being analyzed as apologies, but also how scholars have used this concept for comparative studies. For example, in the decades leading to McCarter's "The Apology of David," several major works appeared that demonstrated how the complex known as the History of David's Rise was composed with the aim of justifying David's usurpation of Saul's throne and defending his legitimacy as Israel's king. But what made McCarter's contribution innovative was its use of the similarly themed Autobiography of Hattusili to illustrate the rhetorical strategies used by David's apologist. Thus earlier analyses of the David narrative, however much they contributed to McCarter's treatment, would not belong in the following survey.

1.2.1 *Apologetic after Sturtevant and Bechtel*

Herbert M. Wolf, "*The Apology of Hattušiliš Compared with Other Political Self-Justifications of the Ancient Near East*" (1967). The first work to focus on the phenomenon of apologetic in ancient Near Eastern literature was Herbert M. Wolf's never-published Brandeis dissertation. Wolf's project involved the establishment of a particular form for the literary genre of apology, which he never defined, but equated with "dynastic defense" (1967, 20–22) and, as the title of the dissertation implies, "political self-justification." After an in-depth analysis of Hattusili's Autobiography (27–98), Wolf declared that this text represents the apologetic genre, and that it therefore provides the standard template for this form despite a lack of comparable examples from the Hittite world.²

Having demonstrated the apologetic nature of the Autobiography, Wolf then searched for other apologies from the ancient Near East (99–117). Surveying

2. "Some might object that 'apology' is an inadequate form designation because this is the only example in Hittite works, and there is little with which it can be compared elsewhere. This deficiency, however, is due to the lack of need for apologies. Telipinuš' law was not violated again, so justification was not demanded. In the case of a form like the treaties, there was ample opportunity for relations with vassals and other powers, and as a result, several examples exist" (Wolf 1967, 22). For a response to this, see Tsevat 1968.

Egyptian and Mesopotamian literature,³ he discussed several texts that contain thematic parallels to the Autobiography, but also noted significant divergences and concluded that other “attempts at dynastic justification have not grappled with political circumstances to the same extent as Ḫattušiliš” (117). Following this survey, Wolf moved to the second major section of his dissertation, an analysis of the David material in 1 Sam 15–2 Sam 8 (118–75). He identified several common themes between the biblical pericope and Hattusili’s Autobiography,⁴ which sufficed for him to assert that the former was originally composed as the apology of David, intended to justify his accession to the throne of Israel. Wolf then argued that, in light of the common nature of these two documents, David’s apology was influenced by Hattusili’s.⁵

Wolf’s dissertation laid the groundwork for further study of apologetic in two significant ways. It established the royal apology as a literary genre with a distinct form, an assumption that has dominated the field ever since. It also illuminated the numerous analogous features between the Autobiography of Hattusili III and the so-called History of David’s Rise, linking these two texts in a manner adopted (or approximated) by countless scholars since. Wolf’s unpublished contributions were not widely cited, however, and his impact on the field was largely mediated

3. Wolf paid special attention to the texts of Esarhaddon and Nabonidus that I feature in this study. He excluded them from the category of apology as follows: “In spite of the fact that these texts contain important parallels to the Apology, the differences are more striking. Even though they follow Ḫattušiliš by six and seven centuries, still they fall far short of the historical calibre of the Apology. The attempt to be logical and factual and to do justice to the human factor stands out in the Apology. Just as the Hittites were the first to develop historiography, so they surpassed that which other nations produced even after the Hittite Empire had collapsed” (1967, 115). Wolf betrays a pro-Hittite bias here, failing to acknowledge the situational similarity of these three texts owing to some perceived, and poorly defined, historical superiority of the Hittites.

4. Although Wolf laid out his project as a form-critical enterprise, he ultimately paid little attention to form. He admitted this himself: “It might be objected that I have leaned too heavily on content at the expense of true ‘formal’ distinctions. Many similar experiences befell the two kings. Yet, if one removes all content from consideration, there is nothing left to discuss and form becomes a meaningless abstraction. The noteworthy fact is that the authors chose to mention many of the same themes. I have stressed these parallels, while neglecting differences, in order to build as strong a case as possible. Admittedly, there is a subjective element involved in form criticism, but this is unavoidable” (1967, 161).

5. Wolf technically never went farther than suggesting “possible Hittite literary influence” (1967, 161) on the Davidic apology, but he clearly supported the idea of direct influence. For example, he wrote, “Could it be that the similarities between the two texts are sheer coincidence, or was there some literary dependence? In the following sections, I shall seek to strengthen the theory of possible dependence by pointing out areas where the Hittite and Hebrew spheres met” (161). He followed this with a section entitled, “Other Evidence of Hittite Influence in Samuel” (162–69).

through the ensuing work of his doctoral advisor. But before discussing that, we must first look at a scholar who dealt with apologetic in a different arena.

T. C. G. Thornton, *"Solomonic Apologetic in Samuel and Kings"* (1968). The following year, T. C. G. Thornton published a brief essay on the apologetic nature not of the Davidic succession material, but the Solomonic. Thornton built his study as a response to the commonly accepted thesis of Leonhard Rost that the underlying question of the Solomonic succession narrative was not "Who will succeed David to the throne?" but "Why was it Solomon who succeeded David to the throne?" (160). Thornton pointed out that Solomon's legitimacy for the throne of Israel could not have been self-evident to his constituency, and that the many executions accompanying the commencement of his reign must have aroused suspicion in the kingdom.⁶ Working independently of the investigation of the apologetic nature of the Hattusili and David texts, and not discernibly aware of such an enterprise,⁷ Thornton demonstrated how another ancient Near Eastern ruler had defended his legitimacy through the dissemination of an official history. Unlike Wolf, Thornton ignored formal considerations, focusing solely on the purpose of the author in composing the text the way he did.⁸ Like Wolf's dissertation, Thornton's essay failed to receive an overabundance of attention. It did, however, influence McCarter's later study of Solomon's apology (McCarter 1981, 359), and it has stood the test of time as an insightful work on its own merits.

Harry A. Hoffner Jr., *"Propaganda and Political Justification in Hittite Historiography"* (1975). The first of the three most influential articles on apologetic in the ancient Near East appeared in 1975 and again brings us to the world of the Hittites. The eminent Hittitologist Harry A. Hoffner Jr., who advised Wolf with his dissertation eight years earlier, expanded Wolf's work with the article "Propaganda and Political Justification in Hittite Historiography." Continuing to assume an under-

6. "Yet Adonijah's attempt to gain the throne did not succeed, and shortly after David himself had died, Adonijah and Joab were executed, Abiathar was deprived of his office, and Solomon was on the throne. An unexpected candidate had succeeded to the kingdom, and his reign had started with a minor bloodbath. What justification could there be for all this? There would have been many who might have felt that Solomon's elevation to the throne and his subsequent actions needed some plausible justification, and such people would be among the audience to whom our writer addressed his work" (Thornton 1968, 161).

7. Thornton's essay, in fact, seems to be the one instance of secondary literature on ancient Near Eastern apologetic that cannot be traced back to Sturtevant and Bechtel.

8. "Yet once we accept that much of 2 Samuel and the first two chapters of 1 Kings may have been written in Solomon's own lifetime, then we must allow that much of the writer's selection of events and much of his treatment of the events themselves may have been affected by apologetic motives. From the very beginning, the question 'Who will sit on David's throne?' is not an open question; both the writer and his readers already know the answer, and are more interested in seeking to justify the position and activities of the throne's present occupant" (1968, 166).

stood definition of apology, Hoffner restricted the term to “the specialized sense of a document composed for a king who had usurped the throne, composed in order to defend or justify his assumption of the kingship by force” (49). Hoffner argued that because there is no Hittite term for such a category, “we must identify surviving Hittite examples by formal criteria alone” (49). Hoffner identified two Hittite apologies, the Autobiography of Hattusili (treated by Wolf) and the Proclamation of Telipinu. The primary purpose of his study was to reveal a common “general pattern, which once discerned demonstrates the more or less traditional way in which Hittite usurpers defended their usurpation” (51). The pattern involved six structural elements: (1) introduction; (2) historical survey: noble antecedents; (3) historical survey: the unworthy predecessor; (4) the coup d’état; (5) the merciful victor; and (6) the edict (51).⁹ The body of Hoffner’s article attempted to bear this out, analyzing each element in the two apologies under consideration (51–56).

One cannot overstate the impact of Hoffner’s work on later studies of apologetic in the ancient Near East. In addition to being crucial for the two ensuing major comparative studies (McCarter 1980, 495–96; Tadmor 1983, 36–37, 54–55), Hoffner’s formal guidelines influenced nearly every later treatment of this phenomenon up to the present (for example, Ishida 1985, 152–53; 1991, 166–68; Dick 2004, 4–5; Suriano 2007, 173 nn. 62–63; Hutton 2009, 159–64; Short 2010, 51–57 and *passim*). Unfortunately, though, I submit that Hoffner’s contribution to the field was not entirely positive. His study had many important insights, and even more importantly, stimulated countless later studies, but his focus on formal criteria was unfounded and based on a flawed understanding of the nature of apologetic. We will explore this more below in §1.5.

P. Kyle McCarter Jr., “*The Apology of David*” (1980). The next major contribution to the study of apologetic in the ancient Near East came in Kyle McCarter’s 1980 article, “The Apology of David.” Although McCarter disagreed with Wolf on some significant issues,¹⁰ his study was something of a distillation of Wolf’s dissertation insofar as it, too, presented an illumination of the David narrative in light of Hattusili’s Autobiography.¹¹ He began by establishing the presence, and delimiting the boundaries, of an originally independent source (the History of

9. It is interesting that despite their relationship, Hoffner and Wolf differed on one major premise of Hittite apologetic. Hoffner’s entire argument rested on the formal similarity of the apologies of Telipinu and Hattusili; meanwhile Wolf asserted that “Its [Hattusili’s Autobiography’s] form differs significantly from any other Hittite document, so that it can be called unique within the Anatolian sphere” (1967, 99).

10. For example, McCarter suggested that Wolf’s theory of the direct influence of Hattusili’s text on the History of David’s Rise “seems to go much too far” (1980, 498 n. 22).

11. McCarter acknowledged his indebtedness to Wolf, writing “Wolf’s study clarifies the provenience and character of the history of David’s rise in a fundamental way and deserves more attention than it has received” (1980, 498 n. 22).

David's Rise) underlying the present text of 1 Sam 16–2 Sam 5 (489–93).¹² He then sought to describe the character of this independent work, combining the insights of earlier biblical scholarship focusing on David's attempt at self-justification and legitimation (especially Weiser 1966 and Grønbaek 1971) with the apologetic studies of Wolf and Hoffner (1980, 493–99). McCarter paid little heed to the formal considerations of Hoffner¹³ but asserted that the thematic similarity between the texts of Hattusili and David provide insight into the motivation behind the commissioning of the latter: "... the apology of Hattushilish demonstrates the potential for an elaborate development of this genre in the general cultural milieu in which the history of David's rise was composed, and the striking similarity of themes in the two compositions is a clue to the original character of the Israelite document" (498). Through his comparison of themes, McCarter then uncovered a variety of accusations against David to which the text responded, including charges of his status as a deserter, outlaw, and mercenary, and his implication in the deaths of several of his enemies (499–502). McCarter concluded with a brief discussion of the theology of special election present in the text (502–4).

"The Apology of David" sharpened Wolf's thesis and introduced the understanding of the character of the David narrative as a royal apology to the field of biblical studies in a far more accessible way. McCarter's basic interpretation of the History of David's Rise has since become nearly ubiquitous among those biblical scholars who ascribe to David more than a modicum of historicity but accept the basic tenets of historical criticism.¹⁴ For example, McCarter's ideas saturate the monographs of Halpern (2001, see esp. pp. 75–76), McKenzie (2000, see esp.

12. "Except for the prophetic and deuteronomistic additions just cited, therefore, 1 Sam 16:14–2 Sam 5:10 is an old, more or less unified composition describing David's rise to power, which can be subjected to independent analysis" (1980, 493).

13. "Surely there is nothing distinctively Hittite or even ancient Near Eastern about the literary category of political self-justification with its accompanying claims of the legitimacy of the usurper, his ability to rule, his moral rectitude, and his divine election to office. Efforts to find more than 'a certain loose literary form' shared by the several examples of the category would probably fail" (1980, 498).

14. That is, the bulk of mainstream biblical scholarship. This excludes the so-called minimalists, who assert that the biblical David material (among other things) is a literary invention that came about nearly half a millennium after the alleged figure was said to exist. For example, John Van Seters (whose work I discuss further in §5.2.2) argues that the various portions of the David saga were all composed several centuries after any figure by the name David might have existed; this therefore precludes the existence of any apologetic rhetoric in the text.

One possible exception—a nonminimalist who argues against the apologetic character of the David narrative—is J. Randall Short, whose work I discuss in the following chapter (see also Knapp 2013). I would characterize his work as adhering to an essentially nonhistorical method of interpretation, however, in which questions about the historical realities of David's world are based on *a priori* judgments.

pp. 30–36), and Baden (2013, 43–46), which serve as bellwethers of recent David scholarship (although the consensus of this type of interpretation has dissipated in recent years).

Hayim Tadmor, “Autobiographical Apology in the Royal Assyrian Literature,” (1983). The Assyriologist Hayim Tadmor provided the next major study of this phenomenon and the last of the three most significant early works on ancient Near Eastern apologetic. In “Autobiographical Apology in the Royal Assyrian Literature,” Tadmor performed the first investigation of apologetic from Mesopotamia, focusing particularly on the apologies of the Neo-Assyrian Sargonid kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal. Tadmor restricted his inquiry to “Literary compositions by kings who assumed their office in an irregular fashion” (36) and characterized them in two ways: “These compositions are the only ones within the entire corpus of Ancient Near Eastern royal literature to contain autobiographical elements. Furthermore, they are usually of an apologetic nature, explaining the irregular circumstances under which their royal authors, not being first in the line of succession, reached their thrones” (36). After acknowledging the status of Hattusili’s apology as “the most eloquent specimen of this autobiographical genre” (36), Tadmor turned to the purpose of his study, which was to examine the *Sitz im Leben* of such texts. He argued that, contrary to popular perception, the apologies were not written to combat accusations at the start of a ruler’s reign but to confirm their legitimacy as they grew older and became concerned for the continuation of their dynasty: “It is our contention that they were composed not so much to reflect apologetically upon the past but rather to serve certain imminent political aims in the present or some particular design for the future.... They were written, we shall attempt to show, in conjunction with the appointment of a successor—a crucial moment in the life of every king and especially of those whose own coming to the throne was not entirely in order” (37–38). He attempted to demonstrate this first through analysis of Esarhaddon’s apology, the composition of which he linked to Esarhaddon’s atypical promotion of his younger son Assurbanipal to the status of crown prince (38–47).¹⁵ He followed this with a suggestion that Assurbanipal’s apology, too, was composed in the light of arranging his own succession, although whatever arrangements Assurbanipal made are lost to us (47–52). After a brief discussion of a fragmentary text of Šamši-Adad V that may have featured similar apologetic elements (53–54), Tadmor concluded by suggesting some non-Assyrian royal apologies that may have been composed in the apologist’s twilight years in support of his thesis (54–57). Tadmor followed Hoffner in treating apologetic as an historically situated literary genre, and thus considered the presence of Neo-Assyrian apologies to be “further evidence of the Western impact upon Assyria” (56).

15. I respond to this in my own discussion of the *Sitz im Leben* of Esarhaddon’s apology; see §8.4 below.

Tadmor's article impacted the field in two ways. First, by identifying apologies in Mesopotamian material he introduced Assyriologists to the study of this phenomenon. In this way he particularly influenced some of the following contributions to be discussed, especially those of Ishida. Additionally, his theory on the common motivations behind the various ancient Near Eastern apologies has led later scholars to attempt to situate other apologies in similar situations. Since this assumption has held sway over analyses of ancient Near Eastern royal apologies for the last three decades, I examine it in this study.

Tomoo Ishida, "'Solomon Who Is Greater Than David': Solomon's Succession in 1 Kings I–II in the Light of the Inscription of Kilamuwa, King of Y'DY-Šam'al" (1985) and *"The Succession Narrative and Esarhaddon's Apology: A Comparison"* (1991). Inspired by Tadmor,¹⁶ Tomoo Ishida explored the question of connection between western (that is, Anatolian/Levantine) and eastern (that is, Mesopotamian) apologies in some ensuing works. Having hitherto done extensive research on the foundations of legitimacy in Israel's royal dynastic ideology (focusing on David in Ishida 1977 and Solomon in Ishida 1982), Ishida contributed to the study of apologetic particularly with two studies (Ishida 1985 and 1991). In the first of these studies, Ishida picked up the idea of Solomonic apologetic laid down by Thornton (whose work he never overtly incorporated, however) and McCarter (1981), describing 1 Kgs 1–2 as "an apologetic composition from the early days of Solomon, aiming at legitimatizing not only his irregular succession but also his execution of his brother, high officials of the old regime and a leader of the Saulides" (1985, 145). He then interpreted Solomon's propaganda in light of that seen in the Kilamuwa inscription (145–53), in which the ninth-century Šam'al ruler briefly described his reign.¹⁷

In the second of the aforementioned studies, Ishida combined his own work on Solomon and Tadmor's work on Esarhaddon with Hoffner's generic understanding of apologetic. In the first part of the study, Ishida analyzed Esarhaddon's apology according to the structural outline given by Hoffner (1991, 166–68)¹⁸ and confirmed, "it is clear that we may classify Esarhaddon's apology under the same

16. Ishida worked with Tadmor during his graduate studies, which he conducted at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Ishida's most apologetic-focused study (1991) appeared in a *Festschrift* in honor of Tadmor.

17. I do not include the Kilamuwa inscription in this study because it does not seem like an apology at all, only an autobiographical self-aggrandizing inscription. Even the idea that Kilamuwa usurped the throne is based solely on the fact that he mentions his brother as his immediate predecessor; without information on the conclusion of his brother's reign, the assumption that there was a coup is pure speculation. See my remarks in §2.2.2.

18. Tadmor deliberately avoided this type of analysis, but encouraged some other scholar to undertake it: "Our present inquiry will not be concerned with the formal structure and the literary qualities of these and similar royal documents of self-justification—a topic which deserves a separate study and methodologically different approach" (1983, 37).

genre as the Hittite apologetic works" (168). In the second part, he compared Esarhaddon's apology to 1 Kgs 1–2 and discovered a common structure underlying each (168–73). He then essentially employed the law of syllogism, stating, "if we recognize ... the frame timbers of the structure of the composition, it becomes clear that the Succession Narrative belongs to a genre called 'Royal Historical Writings of an Apologetic Nature' under which Esarhaddon's apology is also classified" (173).

Michael B. Dick, *"The 'History of David's Rise to Power' and the Neo-Babylonian Succession Apologies"* (2004). Just over a decade later, Michael Dick called attention to parallels between the apology of David (which, by this point, was often discussed in the scholarly literature) and the inscription on the Babylon Stele of Nabonidus in "The 'History of David's Rise to Power' and the Neo-Babylonian Succession Apologies."¹⁹ Dick began by briefly summarizing earlier work on the apologetic character of the David narrative (3–5), then did a comparative study of the similar rhetoric employed by David and Nabonidus (5–12). Dick, however, deliberately separated his own work from that of Wolf and Hoffner inasmuch as they envisioned direct influence among the various ancient Near Eastern apologies: "I propose that these similarities do not argue for any literary dependence whatsoever (it is amusing to imagine the Neo-Babylonian scribes carefully perusing the HDR to justify their monarch's legitimacy!). Rather the nature of sacral kingship itself dictates such correspondences" (6). He bore this out in the final section of the study, "The Rhetoric of 'Legitimate' Usurpation," which examined the significance of the thematic parallels for our understanding of the shared royal ideology in Israel and the Neo-Babylonian Empire (12–19). He established four shared rhetorical strategies used by David and Nabonidus to bolster their legitimacy: the predecessor's loss of divine approval, the new ruler's passivity toward power, his divine approbation, and his sartorial self-presentation.²⁰

Matthew J. Suriano, *"The Apology of Hazael: A Literary and Historical Analysis of the Tel Dan Inscription"* (2007). A few years later, Matthew Suriano, building on much of the work discussed above, identified another apologetic text in the

19. Dick mentioned the Cyrus Cylinder on several occasions as another example of a Neo-Babylonian apology, but restricted his analysis almost exclusively to David and Nabonidus.

20. Although Dick does not overtly use Hoffner's (or anyone else's categories), it is not surprising that three of the four rhetorical strategies presented here correspond closely to those I discuss in §2.1. His final criterion, that "they were dressed as kings: clothes make the king!" (2004, 12) is not strictly apologetic as I define it. His discussion of Nabonidus's attempt to establish legitimacy through iconography (15–18) is interesting, and would certainly merit investigation if more of the rulers featured in this study left iconographic remains. Dick concluded: "Often such devices as iconography compensate for the absence of a legitimate dynastic claim to the throne and attempt to gap the absence of dynastic succession. Since most of the subjects of the new king would be illiterate, the iconographic claim might easily remain the paramount *apologia*" (19).

Tel Dan Inscription. After reviewing the previous decade's effusion of secondary literature on this text (163–64), Suriano examined some of the literary motifs present in the short inscription and determined that all of them deal with aspects of a new ruler's legitimacy (164–71). He then performed a brief form-critical analysis, in which he interacted with the work of Hoffner, Tadmor, Ishida, and others (171–73). Suriano described the Tel Dan Inscription as “a memorial inscription” that “made use of several literary motifs that were apologetic in nature” (171–72). He concluded the essay with various historical conclusions drawn from his study (173–75).

1.2.2 Desiderata for Future Studies of Apologetic in the Ancient Near East

Apologetic is now well secured in the field of ancient Near Eastern studies as a category of text. The term has been applied most frequently to the saga of David in the Hebrew Bible and to the Autobiography of Hattusili III, but analyses have been made of the apologetic nature of texts involving Telipinu, Solomon, Hazael, Kilamuwa, Esarhaddon, Assurbanipal, and Nabonidus as well. Moreover, though no publications known to me are dedicated exclusively to their status as apologies, passing mention has been made of apologies by Idrimi, Zakkur, Joash, Neriglissar, Cyrus, Darius, Xerxes, and others.²¹ But despite the broad chronological and geographic range of this phenomenon and its widespread recognition among scholars, some basic issues regarding the nature of apologetic remain unresolved—and sometimes unbroached.

I will highlight here three significant aspects of apologetic for which I see a divergence of understandings among scholars of the ancient Near East. This inconsistency is compounded by the fact that most scholars seem unaware of their differences with their colleagues—that is, each of the above-mentioned articles works from different premises regarding the nature of apologetic, but rarely are these premises explicitly stated.

First, questions remain about the context of apologetic. As noted above, Sturtevant and Bechtel originally labeled Hattusili's autobiography an apology on the grounds that it was composed in a legal setting. Since then, though, most scholars have treated apologetic as a predominantly political term.²² Do apologies belong in one particular rhetorical sphere?

21. As I discuss in section §2.2.2, I do not agree with the designation of some of these as apologies.

22. See, for example, Ishida 1982; he does not yet use the term “apology” here (he seems to have adopted the term from Tadmor's important article from 1983) but it lays the groundwork for his apologetic discussions in later articles. See also the discussion in McCarter 1981, where he essentially equates apologetic with “court propaganda” (1981, 357).

Second, and far more importantly, there has been almost no discussion of what exactly ancient Near East specialists mean when they use the term “apologetic.” The term itself is straightforward. “Apology” comes from the Greek ἀπολογία, literally meaning a “speech in defence” (Liddell and Scott 1968, 208).²³ Indeed, every treatment described above finds at its core the idea of defense or justification, which is also the core concept of the Greek term. Beyond this, however, scholars have gone in several directions. Wolf equated apologetic with political self-justification; Hoffner restricted his study to usurpers seeking to defend their seizure of power; Tadmor considered any explanation of irregular accession (therefore broader than Hoffner but narrower than Wolf); and so forth. The most urgent question facing a study of apologetic in the ancient Near East is therefore definitional: What is an apology? What is the essence of this term?

The third issue, which proceeds from the previous one, concerns what sort of category apologetic constitutes. Is apologetic a genre, and if so, what type of genre is it? Is the literary classification of apologetic culturally bound or transhistorical? Wolf and Hoffner both defined apologetic by formal criteria (Wolf 1967, 12–22; Hoffner 1975, 50–51), but this was questioned by Tsevat and McCarter (Tsevat 1968, 458, 460; McCarter 1980, 498). Among later scholars, some adopted Hoffner’s idea, most notably Ishida, who applied the formal criteria to some non-Hittite texts in order to classify them as apologies (1991, 166–67; see also more recently Short 2010, 51–98; Hutton 2009, 159–64, 192–93). The question remains open, however, and has not received more than passing mention in the various works to date.

These three questions—In what contexts may we appropriately detect an apology? What precisely is apologetic? What sort of category is apologetic?—all require answers. As adumbrated in §1.1, I believe these answers have already been provided by scholars of rhetoric; all that remains is to apply the answers to the field of ancient Near Eastern studies. In the rest of this chapter I will attempt to clarify these issues to establish a common ground for future work in ancient Near Eastern studies, including my own textual studies, which constitute the bulk of this volume.

1.3 THE EVOLUTION OF THE TERM “APOLOGY”

In what contexts may we appropriately detect an apology? One can address this question fairly easily by appeal to the evolution of the term, already sketched in the introduction. I will examine this here in more depth, aided by insights from

23. Hoffner recognizes this in the opening sentence of his article: “The term ‘apology’ as a designation of a formal composition has most frequently been applied to texts from early Christian and pre-Christian times to denote a detailed defense against false attacks and accusations” (1975, 49).

Sharon Downey, a rhetorical scholar, whose oft-cited article, “The Evolution of the Rhetorical Genre of Apologia” (1993), serves as a useful accompaniment to this discussion.

The term *apology* was born in the legal world of classical Greece, where it constituted a legal defense in court. Downey describes it:

When accused of a misdeed, the apologist composed and delivered a speech of self-defense in the presence of her/his accuser(s) and the voting body of the General Assembly who, upon completion of the address, rendered a vote and, if guilty, a sentence immediately.... For all practical purposes, apologia was a speech of survival with the accused's overriding aim to seek acquittal and not merely to defend one's actions. (1993, 46–47)

She illustrates the features of the classical apology by quoting a speech of Demosthenes, and concludes that the primary focus of the classical apology was “self-exoneration” (1993, 48).

Early Christian writers borrowed the term and a layer of theological meaning naturally adhered to it—with their lifestyle and their belief system under attack together, the Christians simultaneously defended their deeds and their theology. This situation continued into the medieval period, though with some modification. Although by this time Christianity had come to dominate in the western world, spurious forms of the faith were liable to punishment, even death. Again, one's apology responded to such accusations of heresy (or, in the case of specific transgressions against the crown, to accusations of treason; cf. Downey 1993, 48). Downey sees something akin to the juridical sphere of classical Greek apologies, but she points out that apologies in this period usually came after the (guilty) sentence was already rendered: “In many cases, the apologia was delivered at the scaffold immediately preceding execution” (Downey 1993, 49). Thus apologists did not seek acquittal, but justification. She presents the focus of medieval apologies as self-absolution (1993, 48–50).

Against this backdrop, one cannot miss the irony in today's English vernacular use of *apology*, which presupposes an acknowledgment of wrongdoing. The term historically referred to just the opposite—not admission of wrongdoing, but denial and explanation of it. Interestingly, these two antithetical meanings meld somewhat in the discussions of *apology* (or *apologia*) that are common in modern rhetorical scholarship. Here *apology* refers to a certain type of discourse aimed at repairing one's reputation after some sort of public debacle, most frequently with regard to political figures, but also with celebrities and even corporations. Downey describes the function of apologetic in the contemporary period as “self-deception”; for example, she writes, “Such rhetoric [as contemporary *apologia*] reflects contradictory, self-serving motives, ‘masks moral responsibility,’ exploits audience ignorance and emotions while championing the same values breached by

the apologist, undermines facts and accuracy, and shuns confrontation of issues” (1993, 58).²⁴

This emphasis in rhetorical scholarship on apology as image repair helps to explain the evolution of the term. Throughout the more than two millennia in which *apology* has transformed, gained and shed subtle shades of meaning, and been appropriated with new nuances for new contexts, one essential characteristic of the term has remained unchanged: *apology* must be understood in light of the situation that elicits the discourse. Apologies are responsive texts; apologetic discourse is composed in response to attacks on one’s character.²⁵ Although apologetic is often treated differently in legal, theological, and political spheres, rhetorical study reveals this distinction to be somewhat artificial.²⁶ Apologists from Socrates to Bill Clinton have all faced the common situation of having to defend themselves against accusations. This commonality holds particularly true for this discussion. I survey material from the civilizations of the ancient Near East, in which there were porous boundaries between the realms of law, religion, and politics: as Frankfort noted long ago, “if we refer to kingship as a political institution, we assume a point of view which would have been incomprehensible to the ancients” (1978, 3). It would therefore be arbitrary to restrict the discussion to only texts that appeared in a legal sphere or only political discourses. It is best to seek a more integrative approach when providing a definition of apologetic to serve the field of ancient Near Eastern studies, which is my purpose here. I will attempt to do so in the following section, allowing for apologetic to appear in all sorts of contexts.

1.4 THE ESSENCE OF APOLOGETIC IN RHETORICAL SCHOLARSHIP

What precisely is apologetic? The most basic question that requires an answer for this study concerns the meaning of apologetic. As noted above, scholars assume different senses of this word, which lead to different conclusions when a given text

24. This strikes me as overly pessimistic. Downey’s description here reflects a deep cynicism that seems to prejudge any apologist as guilty just for being in a situation wherein an apology is needed. That said, it is also interesting in light of the ancient apologies that serve as the focus of this study—some of the rulers under discussion could certainly be said to exploit audience ignorance, mask moral responsibility, etc.

25. Theological apologetics differs slightly in this regard, but (1) the term developed from use in the early church, where the *apologia* was often personal as well as theological, and (2) contemporary Christian apologetics respond to (or, frequently, anticipate) attacks on the faith; thus they are responsive/defensive, but with Christianity itself in the place of the accused.

26. One can detect a distinction in jargon used to describe apologetic discourses in these three areas: a legal apologetic text is often referred to as an *apologia*; a theological apologetic text is often referred to as *apologetics*, and a political apologetic text is often referred to as an *apology*. The distinction does not always hold, though.

receives the label “apology.” Fortunately, apologetic has generated much interest in the field of rhetoric in recent decades.²⁷ Rhetorical scholars have traced the stages of development of the term and attempted to integrate the various contexts; for example, Downey (1993) examined the phenomenon of the apologia in ancient Greece and employed it to analyze modern political speeches.²⁸ The essence of the definition of apologetic within rhetoric is “restoration of reputation”; apologies are presented in response to attacks on a person’s character. In the following I will unpack this, using as a starting point the seminal study of apologetic in the field of rhetoric.

In 1973, B. L. Ware and Wil Linkugel published “They Spoke in Defense of Themselves: On the Generic Criticism of Apologia.” This article sparked among rhetorical scholars a resurgence in interest in apologetic that has not yet abated. They write,

We believe that apologetical discourses constitute a distinct *form* of public address, a family of speeches with sufficient elements in common so as to warrant legitimately generic status. The recurrent theme of accusation followed by apology is so prevalent in our record of public address as to be, in the words of Kenneth Burke, ‘situations typical and recurrent enough for men to feel the need of having a name for them.’ In life, an attack upon a person’s character, upon his worth as a human being, does seem to demand a direct response. The questioning of a man’s *moral nature, motives, or reputation* is qualitatively different from the challenging of his policies. Witnesses to such a personal charge seem completely and most easily satisfied only by the most personal of responses by the accused. In the case of men and women of position, this response is usually a public speech of self-defense, the apology. (Ware and Linkugel 1973, 273–74; all emphasis theirs)

Ware and Linkugel’s definition, “a public speech of self-defense,” accords with the Greek ἀπολογία and is useful for ancient Near Eastern studies, albeit imperfectly

27. Unfortunately, rhetorical/communications scholarship has often lacked precision in the terminology for describing apologetic. The most common jargon seems to be to use “apologia” as the term for the genre as a whole, with any given instance of the genre constituting an “apology.” This distinction holds for Ware and Linkugel (1973), though not everywhere else. In the last two decades, rhetorical scholars have drawn a more firm distinction between the idea of apologia (being a self-defense) and the idea of apology (being an admission of wrongdoing and expression of remorse). For example, Hearit writes, “An ‘apologia’ is not an apology (though it *may* contain one), but a defense...” (1994, 115). I do not preserve this distinction in this study because “apologia” is still too closely associated with the juridical defenses of ancient Greece.

28. Rhetorical scholars have focused mostly on apologetic in political contexts, but it is also studied in legal, corporate, and other contexts in this field (see Jasinski 2001).

so. We will now examine the three main components of this definition, paying special attention to their appropriateness for investigating texts from the ancient Near East.

1.4.1 “Public”: The Propagandistic Criterion of Apologetic

The first aspect of apologetic is the most obvious, although it raises several questions for this study. All apologetic is propaganda, and propaganda is inherently public.²⁹ Propaganda is “a form of persuasion consciously deployed with the intention of convincing others to see things from the point of view of the propagator” (Seibert 2006, 13). It is produced in order to persuade others, be they one’s jury, the general populace, one’s opponents, or even one’s supporters. Because persuasion serves as the *sine qua non* of propaganda, the propagandist always adapts his discourse for a particular audience.³⁰ Thus to characterize apologetic as public is almost a tautology.³¹

Since apologetic is, without exception, propagandistic, some remarks on the nature of propaganda are in order before proceeding. First, in a recent treatment of ideology in Assyria, Siddall has pointed out that there is often some confusion between propaganda and ideology (especially in works on propaganda in the ancient world). He defines ideology as “the *system* of thought, customs and beliefs of a culture,” while propaganda is “the *dissemination* of ideology to an intended audience in an effort to shape and alter the audience’s ideology to that of the propagandist’s” (2013, 136–37; emphasis his). This is an important distinction, even if I think Siddall’s definition of propaganda here is perhaps too narrow, as I will attempt to clarify below.

The focus on propaganda as the “dissemination of ideology” helps us bear in mind that, contrary to popular perception, propaganda is not necessarily evil or even deceptive.³² In *Munitions of the Mind: A History of Propaganda*, Philip Taylor spends the entire first chapter attempting to rid the reader of the negative baggage

29. It is worth noting that apologetic is a subset of propaganda: All apologetic is propaganda; not all propaganda is apologetic. Since propaganda is inherently public, so is apologetic. What distinguishes apologetic from other propaganda is its particular exigence, for which see §1.4.3 below. While there is a vast amount of propagandistic material from the ancient world, apologetic is much more rare, and applies only in situations where one can identify attacks upon the character of the person doing the defense.

30. On the importance of identifying the audience of propaganda, see Seibert 2006, 10–11; Whitlam 1986; 1984, 66–67.

31. For discussions of propaganda in the Hebrew Bible particularly, see Seibert 2006, 6–14; Mason 1997; Liverani 1992; Whitlam 1986; 1984, 65–68. For propaganda in Assyria, see most recently Siddall 2013, 134–49; also Tadmor 1997, 332–34; Liverani 1979 (esp. pp. 300–303).

32. This sentiment has been noted by previous scholars of the ancient Near East who have

of this “good word gone wrong” (2003, 2). He describes propaganda as a neutral term that was developed to signify only “the means by which the converted attempted to persuade the unconverted” (2003, 4).³³ By labeling propaganda as good or bad, we lose our objectivity, which is essential for effective analysis (2003, 5–6). Interestingly, Taylor himself loses sight of this point and unwittingly demonstrates just such a lack of objectivity early in his own work. He focuses on propaganda in the preclassical world (which is clearly not his primary focus of study) in his first chapter, and although he makes some fine points, he betrays a naive and orientalist (using Said’s term) understanding of the ancient Near East. For example, he writes, “Religion was used cynically by rulers to promote loyalty and fear among the ruled. Undoubtedly superstitious themselves, ancient kings backed up their propaganda with terror, both in peace and war...” Shortly afterward, he implicitly contrasts this with “the flowering of Greek civilization” (2003, 24). To dismiss all ancient kings as “superstitious” fearmongers who manipulated the religion of the ruled to increase their power is an egregious assertion that, ironically, results from (among other things) the propaganda of later western cultures in descriptions of the ancient Near East. Contrast this with Siddall’s discussion, born from a deeper understanding of the ancient world:

When this framework [referencing Marxist ideas of power] has been applied in Ancient History it has resulted in a perception that the promoters of ideology were cynically doing so. That is, ancient kings, like any other ruler or politician, pushed their ideology to exploit the masses. A consequence of that line of thought—perhaps unintended—is that the Assyrian kings did not really believe the ideology through which they ruled. However, Liverani has argued that for an ideology to be effective the beneficiaries (*i.e.* the ruling elite) must be self-convinced. Given that most Mesopotamian institutions, such as the palace and temple, were millennia old by the Neo-Assyrian period, there is little question that the Assyrian ruling elite would have been thoroughly convinced of their position and authority. (Siddall 2013, 138)

Siddall is surely correct here and he provides a needed reminder for those prone to cynical readings of texts (which may include this author). But I would qualify his discussion in one way. The definition of propaganda as “dissemination of ideology” followed by the assertion that ancient kings were convinced of “the ideology through which they ruled” nearly strips the rulers of any agency. It is possible, of course, for humans to act in self-serving ways that are inconsistent with their

worked with propaganda; see Seibert 2006, 6; Liverani 1992, 474; Whitelam 1984, 65–66; see also Tadmor 1997, 332.

33. For example, this paragraph is propaganda insofar as I intend to convert the reader to this understanding of the term. I hope that the reader does not feel unduly manipulated.

ideology, and then to employ propaganda to convince others of the correctness of those actions. So although as noted above, propaganda is not *necessarily* evil or deceptive, it *may* be evil or deceptive.

The preceding remarks affect this study in the following way. When I discuss the propagandistic aims of the various apologies simply as propaganda, I do not intend this as a value judgment. My primary goal is to evaluate the rhetoric of the apologist and determine the motivation for commissioning the texts. I do not feel compelled by the existence of the apology itself to take either side and that is not the purpose of this study. When interpreting the apologies, though, it is often difficult to avoid rendering a judgment, and I do reserve the right to take the side of the accusers or the apologist after weighing the evidence.

Among politicians in particular—and here I must relapse to referring to ancient Near Eastern kings as politicians even though, as noted above, this is an anachronistic and limiting term—the public at large often forms the audience for an apology. Apologies serve to restore one's image, a goal served by targeting as wide an audience as possible. Especially in the case of political figures, whose careers are shaped by their public perception, maintaining a positive reputation is paramount for success. But although the public nature of modern apologies is incontrovertible, one might dispute the application of this criterion to ancient texts. From a practical standpoint, these are written texts, so they could not have circulated among the public millennia before the invention of the printing press, and even if they had, they would have circulated among a predominantly illiterate society.³⁴ Yet to some extent the issue of literacy distracts us from the real questions of propaganda in the ancient world—whether the majority of the public could read or only a small, elite group, it would have been impossible for the public to have access to written texts as such millennia before the invention of the printing press and the capability of mass distribution of written documents. So although I focus on written texts in this study, I accept as a given that the messages of these

34. Addressing this point, Baruch Halpern writes, "In antiquity, even when rising in the 8th and 7th centuries, rates of literacy were low. And many texts, most famously the 6th-century Behistun Inscription of Darius I, were inaccessible to the public. So some scholars assume that texts were not disseminated. Given a low literacy rate, however, the texts' inaccessibility is irrelevant: royal inscriptions could not be widely read even if mounted on billboards. But their propagandistic aims indicate that the texts were indeed disseminated. The audiences that kings targeted were, at a minimum, the officialdom and army, but even more probably the citizenry of major communities. The texts must have been read or summarized at public events, and this informal means of dissemination may have been more effective than writing. That is, the outsider audience was almost wholly illiterate, while the insider audience had a higher literacy rate" (2001, 128–29; see also Laato 1995, 200). There are several ancient references to the public reading of texts; see Porter 1993, 113–15; I would add to her references Ezra's reading of the law in Neh 8.

texts would have been mediated to the masses in some way—if indeed they were intended for the masses.³⁵

This leads to a more significant question: to whom was ancient propaganda directed? Several scholars have addressed this point and have arrived at various conclusions. Some scholars suspect that the propagandistic texts left to us were aimed primarily at the elite echelons of society (Mason 1997, 172; Whitelam 1986, 168; Seibert quotes Mason and Whitelam but provides a somewhat more tempered view [2006, 11–12]; Tadmor also concludes this after vacillating somewhat on the makeup of the ancient audiences [1997, 330–34]).³⁶ Peter Machinist, meanwhile, famously argued that the close resemblance of depictions of Assyria in the First Isaiah to the official ideology of the Assyrian royal inscriptions demonstrates that the biblical writer had access to the (written) inscriptions (1983, 728–31), necessitating a wider reach for the dissemination of royal ideology.³⁷

A few factors complicate this discussion. First, ancient inscriptions have been preserved in a variety of archaeological contexts and in a variety of corresponding literary genres. For example, several of the most famous Assyrian royal inscriptions (including Nineveh A, in which the apology of Esarhaddon appears) come from building inscriptions, which were buried within the foundations of buildings and were thus inaccessible to contemporary human eyes. On the other hand, inscriptions also appear on prominently placed steles, in major centers (such as Nabonidus's Babylon Stele), conquered cities (such as Hazael's Tel Dan Stele), or other locations. These contexts are important, but they do not provide easy answers for who had access to the inscriptions because there is ample evidence that certain texts were issued through diverse media and in various circumstances. The Bisitun Inscription of Darius furnishes us with a wonderful example of this. The

35. Note Liverani's insightful comments on this point: "Our knowledge is only founded on some of the ancient channels of diffusion, not on all of them. Chiefly we know the channel of the written message, which affords us precise data: consequently we are led to overestimate it, to identify it as the channel *par excellence*. Yet we all know that most of the population could not read; and anyway the very location of some texts (e.g. buried under the foundations of a building) poses some doubts as to their function as communication media at the technical and empirical level" (1979, 301–2).

36. Writing specifically of the Neo-Assyrian exemplars of the literary genre of letter to the god (*Gottesbrief*), Pongratz-Leisten suggests that although addressed to the citizenry, these texts actually involved communication primarily between the king and certain temple functionaries (1999, 273–74; also 2013). This does not strip the texts of their propagandistic character, but it restricts the audience from the majority of the citizenry to an elite group.

37. Machinist vacillates somewhat on the how: "That is to say, while our examples have echoes in written Assyrian texts, it is possible that some of them ... reached the prophet and/or his circle through oral or visual channels. Oral proclamations of official texts might have provided one such channel, as in the case of the *rabsāqēh*. Reliefs and other art of the king and army might have yielded another. Still, one ought not to minimize the contact with actual written texts..." (1983, 730).

inscription was inscribed on a cliff deliberately inaccessible to people, its contents apparently intended for the gods. But copies of the inscription have also been unearthed as far as Elephantine, in Egypt, demonstrating that the text's contents were disseminated through other, less-grandiose means.³⁸

Lastly, we must not overlook that royal inscriptions were not composed from scratch whenever an occasion demanded an inscription; instead large sections of text were reused when applicable. Thus the apology in a given text may be a reflex of the king's "canonical" rhetoric instead of being created for the particular stele, relief, etc. on which it has been preserved.³⁹ Another wrinkle appears with the biblical text, which incorporated a wide variety of source material whose original purpose can only be surmised.

Siddall's recent discussion of Assyrian propaganda (2013, 140–49) addresses many of these points and, although he focuses on Neo-Assyria, his remarks apply broadly to many of the texts featured in this study. Siddall prefaces his discussion as follows: "The bombastic accounts of military and building achievements combined with verbose epithets are suggestive of a contemporary audience, but can we take a relationship between the text and immediate dissemination for granted? In accordance with the principles outlined above we must weigh the content of the inscriptions and the artwork against their archaeological context and determine the artefacts' accessibility" (2013, 141). He then surveys the data, taking into account literary genre, archaeological context, potential audiences, etc., and he concludes:

The result of this discussion is that there is little evidence that the Assyrian kings commissioned their inscriptions and art works specifically for a contemporary audience beyond the palace.... However, there were most likely channels through which the royal ideology could have been communicated.... the main channel of propaganda for non-Assyrian cities was oral ... while it is not impossible that there was a written form of propagation, we have outlined why it is difficult to ascribe such a purpose for the majority of Assyrian royal inscriptions. (Siddall 2013, 149)

This conclusion—that there were probably channels for Assyrian propaganda, though we are not certain what they were—seems somewhat anemic after the preceding thorough appraisal. Yet I say this as a compliment, not a critique, of Siddall's work. He acknowledges the limitations of our understanding of Assyrian

38. The dissemination of the Bisitun inscription has long been known; see Cowley 1923, 248–71.

39. On this point, see especially my discussion of the *Sitz im Leben* of the Tel Dan Inscription in §7.4.

propaganda, and he allows that it presumably occurred even if we are uncertain as to the precise mechanism of dissemination.

In light of this, I allow the contents of the texts to dictate my interpretation of their propagandistic nature. I submit that those who argue against the propagandistic nature of certain ancient texts have their line of reasoning backward. One should not first ask, Was this text disseminated among the public? then, on the *a priori* assumption that ancient texts could not be disseminated among the public, declare the text not propagandistic. Instead, one should first ask, Was this text composed as propaganda? then, if the answer is affirmative, infer that the text's contents were (at least intended to be) disseminated among the public.

I support employing the criterion of “public” in order to identify ancient Near Eastern examples of apologetic, but with the caveat that internal clues in a text can reasonably establish this. I conclude my investigation of each text with a discussion of the text's *Sitz im Leben*, in which I examine both internal and external clues to the date of the composition and audience of each text. Inextricably linked to these questions is the question of the purpose of the text. If it cannot be demonstrated that a text was composed as propaganda, then it should not be considered apologetic.

1.4.2 “Speech”: The Mediated (Non)criterion of Apologetic

The second aspect of Ware and Linkugel's definition is that an apology is a “speech.” Taking this at face value, Ware and Linkugel assert that apologies must be delivered by a particular medium, namely, orally.⁴⁰ Later rhetorical scholars have almost universally dismissed this aspect of their definition, however, and I too reject this criterion.⁴¹ Focusing on the medium of the discourse arbitrarily circumscribes the category of apologetic. In a follow-up article seeking to clarify certain aspects of apologies from a rhetorical perspective, Noreen Kruse writes,

If we can consider rhetorical context as one primary requisite for determining what does and what does not constitute an apologia, we can also assume that the veracity of the need for an apologetic response is more significant than the medium in which it is presented. Thus, viewing the situational basis as a criterion allows us to consider materials other than speeches as apologetic. Even though recently we have tended to deal with orally delivered apologiae, an apologia might be presented as an autobiography, a press release,

40. The aspect of “speech” also ties into the formal component of apologetic that Ware and Linkugel espouse; I deal with this at length later in this chapter (see below, §1.5).

41. Alternatively, as adumbrated in §1.4.1, one could acknowledge that even though we have access to these discourses only as written texts, they may have been composed to be delivered orally.

a pamphlet, a play, or a novel.⁴² Whether apologists select a poetic form or a more obviously rhetorical vehicle to carry their discourses is less salient than the fact that circumstances in the empirical world, exigences in the rhetor's environment, are responsible for the product. (Kruse 1981, 282)

As Kruse points out, situational basis is far more important than any formal criteria. To examine what this situational basis is, we turn to the final aspect of Ware and Linkugel's definition.

1.4.3 "Self-Defense": *The Situational Criterion of Apologetic*

The final element of Ware and Linkugel's definition of apologetic is the most important and has received the most attention from rhetorical scholars. Ware and Linkugel qualify an apology as a self-defense, a response to attacks. I describe this as the situational criterion of apologetic, because crucial to the category of apologetic is the circumstance that elicits the discourse. Kruse explains it thus, "The apologia must first be defined in terms of the situation that calls it forth. Rhetorical scholars all presume that apologetic statements are made in self-defense, and, therefore, it follows that they must be provoked by external events" (1981, 280).

Apologetic is rhetorical; one composes an apology for the purpose of persuasion (as opposed to, for example, purposes such as entertainment or administration). Rhetorical composition does not arise in a vacuum but requires a relational context in order to have meaning. The rhetorician Lloyd Bitzer, in his oft-cited article "The Rhetorical Situation," explains, "rhetorical discourse comes into existence as a response to a situation, in the same sense that an answer comes into existence as a response to a question" (1968, 5). For apologetic, the specific situation (or exigence) involves accusations that demand a rebuttal. Apologies can adopt a variety of positions, such as denial, bolstering, differentiation, or transcendence, but all of these respond to a particular accusation (cf. Ware and Linkugel 1973, 274–81).⁴³ In the ancient Near East as in contemporary politics, public figures often came under scrutiny for suspected malfeasance, and the preserved apologies represent their responses to such scrutiny.

Two further comments must be made about the application of the defensive aspect of apologies to the ancient Near Eastern text corpus. First, Ware and Linkugel qualify the defensive aspect of apologetic by noting, "In life, an attack upon

42. Or, of course, a royal inscription.

43. The majority of the rhetorical work done on apologetic involves distinguishing the various stances and postures of the (rhetorical) genre. The stance (or "factor" in Ware and Linkugel's terminology) involves the strategy of defense, such as denial, admission, identification, etc. (1973, 274; see also Jasinski 2001, 20–21). The posture involves the goal of the rhetoric, such as justification, acquittal, etc.

a person's character, upon his worth as a human being, does seem to demand a direct response. The questioning of a man's *moral nature, motives, or reputation* is qualitatively different from the challenging of his policies" (1973, 274). This distinction is not as significant for the ancient Near East as for today, since the legitimacy of ancient Near Eastern rulers' policies derived from their legitimate position as monarch, but it still deserves notice. One does not commission an apology in response to a difference of opinion on a matter, but when one's character has come under attack. Thus apologies typically have a moral or ethical dimension, and they do not serve only as platforms to expound one's views on a given subject. This will become apparent in this study. As I note below (§1.4.5), ancient Near Eastern royal apologies tend to be bipartite, addressing both specific malfeasance allegedly done by the king and the overarching issue of the king's legitimacy. But these two aspects are intertwined, because a legitimate king, serving as the agent of the god(s) and therefore under their aegis, would never have to act in an illicit way. Thus any accusation regarding an individual (mis)deed of the king might serve *pars pro toto* as an accusation of illegitimacy.

Ware and Linkugel then write, "Witnesses to such a personal charge seem completely and most easily satisfied only by the most personal of responses by the accused" (1973, 274). That an apology is "the most personal of responses" places the "self" in "self-defense." One might object on this basis that the two biblical passages included in this study, the narratives of David and Solomon, do not qualify as true apologies. But this is too stringent an application of this idea. Although as biographies they do not purport to be the words of David and Solomon themselves, I contend that the biblical material studied here originated in the royal courts and was as heavily influenced by the reigning monarchs as the formal autobiographies.⁴⁴ This will be discussed more fully in the sections covering the *Sitz im Leben* of each text (see below, §§5.4 and 6.4).

44. Tadmor, who focuses on the autobiographical aspect of apologetic more than any other scholar in the field, concurs: "And finally, though not a case of autobiography, one cannot fail to mention in this context the obvious apologetic nature of the Davidic and Solomonic succession-stories in 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 Kings 1–3. In spite of several current, though largely misguided, attempts to discredit their validity as contemporary records, I adhere to the belief that their only possible *Sitz im Leben* was the necessity to prove the legitimacy of these founders of the Judahite kingship. It is very likely that the Davidic apology, which criticized King Saul and his successors, originates in David's lifetime, perhaps from the later part of his reign, when two rebellions shook his throne, and one of them put to trial the very legitimacy of his dynasty. Also, the kernels of Solomon's apologetic narration could not have been written much later than the time when the Jerusalem Royal-Dynastic Ideology—the apotheosis of David and his dynasty—had already become an accepted *credo*" (1983, 56). As for whether the propaganda is disseminated in first- or third-person form, I would agree with Foucault: "What matter who's speaking?" (1977, 138).

1.4.4 Terminology

In §1.3 I noted that sundry concepts of apologetic exist in fields such as classics and religious studies. Recently rhetorical scholars have done synthetic investigations of apologies throughout history, examining the fundamental aspects of apologetic. After working through Ware and Linkugel's popular definition, with input from some ensuing studies, we are left with two parameters for the category of apologetic. First, a text must be propagandistic—it must be composed for the sake of persuading its audience. Second, a text must be self-defense in response to accusations of some sort of impropriety that cast aspersions on the character of the accused. This results in the following definition: Apologetic is propaganda produced as defense against attacks upon a person's character or conduct. This definition is inclusive; it covers a wide swathe of discourses from innumerable historical contexts.

I should hasten to add that although nearly all previous work on apologetic in the ancient Near East has dealt with monarchs, the adjective “royal” in the title of this volume is necessary. In contrast to Hoffner's specialized use of apology as “a document composed for a king who had usurped the throne” (1975, 49), the definition I prefer makes no claim about what sort of person is being defended.⁴⁵ Theoretically, one in any position or from any echelon of society could craft an apology. Practically, however, in the ancient world kings were among the only people with the resources to commission and disseminate such texts. Broadening the scope of this study beyond royal apologies might not yield any further texts for comparison,⁴⁶ and if it did, it would compromise any homogeneity among the texts treated here. The usefulness of the category, at least for this study, lies in allowing us better to understand royal ideology through the rhetorical strategies employed in the various texts. Including examples from the legal sphere, for example, would be nonsensical.

I have tried to establish a definition of apologetic specifically suitable for ancient Near Eastern studies; other fields have their own jargon and I do not wish to take up the Sisyphean task of creating a universally valid definition. In light of

45. This is not a criticism of Hoffner, who does recognize the broad applicability of the term “apology” and thus deliberately restricts its use for his study. Note also that Dick (2004) never defines the term but refers to the texts in question in his discussion as “succession apologies.” I prefer the adjective “royal” to “succession” because I include some texts, such as the biblical apologies of David and Solomon, that continue past the succession and deal with the king's conduct after taking office.

46. One might legitimately argue that Job's speeches to his friends have an apologetic character—he adamantly defends himself against a variety of accusations. But this would probably fail the test of propaganda, since it derives from the context of wisdom literature. One might also find nonroyal examples of apologetic among ancient Egyptian texts, but I do not include Egyptian material in my study (see below, §2.2 n. 17).

this, I slightly modify the terminology employed in other fields to create a unique vocabulary for ancient Near Eastern studies. Throughout this study, I consistently use “apologetic” to refer to the overarching phenomenon in the abstract (this can be either adjectival or substantive). An example of apologetic is an “apology”—an apology is any discourse composed in an apologetic mode, and may appear in any number of forms or literary genres.⁴⁷ This is in deliberate contrast to “apologia” in classical studies and “apologetics” in current theological works. These latter terms denote specific literary genres of apologetic and are best avoided when describing texts of the ancient Near East. Although some rhetoricians use “apologia” in the sense that I use “apology,” a perfect distinction of terms is impossible given the historical imprecision of the jargon of this field.

1.4.5 Apologetic, Legitimation, and (Self-)Justification

Recognizing the nature of apologetic as response involves one departure from the definitions employed by Hoffner and Tadmor that have governed much ensuing scholarship.⁴⁸ These definitions find their basis in the situation being described—an irregular succession—rather than the situation that caused the discourse to exist. I submit that overtly taking into account motivation and exigence is appropriate given the historical derivation of the word and its use in rhetorical scholarship. At the same time, I do not wish to overstate this distinction. Although neither Hoffner nor Tadmor explicitly acknowledge exigence, they do so implicitly. Hoffner specifies the situation of usurpation and Tadmor notes that the royal authors could not have been first in the line of succession; both of these contexts would have provoked opponents to the new regime and all but demanded a response emphasizing the legitimacy of the upstart.

I will try to illustrate this with two examples. First, the Autobiography of As-surbanipal employs several motifs for establishing legitimacy, including the three primary elements of divine election, royal prerogative, and popular acclamation

47. I use “literary” only to qualify genre as described below in §1.5; elsewhere I deliberately avoid the term “literary” in all parts of this definition. Literary can mean (1) pertaining to written texts; or (2) pertaining to a specific type of text “of artful form, content, and expression” (Foster 2005, 45). Neither of these meanings is intrinsic to apologetic. Obviously, when dealing with the ancient Near East written texts are the only available medium for the extant apologies, but some apologies doubtless developed originally in oral contexts.

48. Hoffner: “We will use the term ‘apology’ in the ensuing discussion in the specialized sense of a document composed for a king who had usurped the throne, composed in order to defend or justify his assumption of the kingship by force” (1975, 49).

Tadmor: Certain compositions are “of an apologetic nature, explaining the irregular circumstances under which their royal authors, not being first in the line of succession, reached their thrones” (1983, 36).

(see §2.1 in the following chapter).⁴⁹ For this reason Tadmor uses the text as one of his paradigmatic examples of Assyrian royal apology (Tadmor 1983, 47–52); it qualifies because it meets Tadmor's criteria of explaining an irregular succession. One might object, though, that the Autobiography of Assurbanipal fails to meet the criterion described here of being a response to accusations of illegitimacy—Assurbanipal's accession to the throne appears not to have raised suspicion since his father, Esarhaddon, publicly elevated him to the position of crown prince and paved the way for a smooth succession. The problem with this objection is that it too ignores the rhetorical situation of the text. Although ample evidence survives to indicate that Assurbanipal was the legitimate successor of Esarhaddon, we do not know what precisely elicited the explanation of his rise to the throne in this inscription. Given the emphasis on his legitimacy in several inscriptions during his reign, it is likely that despite his public nomination by his father, Assurbanipal had his detractors in Assyria.

A similar discussion could be had about Cyrus, specifically in regard to the Cyrus Cylinder. The text contains one of the most elaborate explanations of legitimacy to survive from the ancient Near East, focusing on Marduk's election of Cyrus to redress the many grave transgressions of his predecessor, Nabonidus. We do not see a response to any specific charges, though, and according to the portrait of Cyrus still prevalent in much scholarship, he would have had no need to defend himself against any accusations; his arrival in Babylon allegedly met with universal approbation. But there is growing acknowledgment that more skepticism is called for here because virtually all our sources for historical reconstruction are Cyrus's own propaganda.⁵⁰ Again, the likeliest explanation for the commissioning of the Cyrus Cylinder is to respond to Cyrus's opponents. Briant writes, "Nevertheless, the *Cylinder* allows us to understand what kind of propaganda the new regime put out in order to attract the cooperation of the royal elite" (2002, 43). Cyrus needed to win over those who were against him, so defending his legitimacy was an appropriate first step.

I would not object to classifying either the Autobiography of Assurbanipal or the Cyrus Cylinder as apologies, despite the lack of obvious responses to specific charges. Both texts appear to respond to more general accusations of illegitimacy. There is, of course, some circularity in this method—I propose we should label texts apologies on the basis of their rhetorical situation, but I also accept that we can only derive the rhetorical situation from interpreting the (apologetic) texts.

49. For a further brief description of the Autobiography of Assurbanipal and its various recensions, see §2.2.1 in the following chapter.

50. For example, in his magisterial work on the Persian Empire, Pierre Briant calls into question the "canonical image of Cyrus" that emerges from the Persian sources. He writes, "The traditional interpretation evokes suspicion to the extent that it agrees with the image that Persian propaganda itself would have portrayed" (2002, 41).



Fig. 1. *Legitimation and justification in ancient Near Eastern apologetics*

But this is not problematic. Ultimately, the label apology is useful primarily as a means of reflecting how we interpret a given text, so the classification should result from interpretation. As I discuss below in §1.5, there is nothing structural or formal that indicates an apology. But this does lead to one further helpful clarification of terms.

I accept that apologetic incorporates both specific defenses against particular allegations of misconduct and broad defenses of legitimacy. For the purposes of this study, I classify the former, defenses against particular allegations, as “justifications.” The latter, broad defenses of a monarch’s legitimacy, I classify as “legitimizations.” For example, David’s alibi that he was in the south in Ziklag during the battle in which Saul was killed serves as a justification against the accusation that he was involved in the murder of his predecessor. But the narrative of Yahweh electing David through the prophet Samuel to shepherd the people serves as a legitimation; this explains why David was an appropriate candidate for the throne. Both belong under the broader rubric of apologetic. Most ancient Near Eastern apologies include both justifications and legitimations, but some include only one or the other.⁵¹ Figure 1 illustrates this.

While acknowledging that the defenses against misconduct (justifications) and the declarations of legitimacy (legitimizations) are often inextricable, I begin each apologetic analysis with a discussion of the rhetoric used in the king’s legitimation and continue with an examination of the justifications that respond to specific charges.

51. The only other scholar I am aware of to draw attention to this distinction is Ishida, who writes, “I believe that the Solomonic legitimation consists of two conflicting elements: an apology for his legitimacy and a defence for his deeds” (1985, 146). With my terminology, the apology would refer to both elements, the explanation of his legitimacy (legitimation) and the defense of his deeds (justification).

1.5 WHY APOLOGETIC IS NOT A LITERARY GENRE⁵²

What sort of category is apologetic? That apologetic functions as a genre has been assumed by most scholars of the ancient Near East who have worked with apologetic material, but I want to challenge, or at least qualify, this assumption. As I will show below, the misunderstanding of apologetic as genre has led to several ill-advised interpretations of various apologies. Investigating whether one can treat apologetic as a genre is a complicated task, however, since the field of modern genre studies has advanced in disparate directions in recent decades. There is no agreed-upon vocabulary of even the most basic terms (see Frow 2006, 65). I will thus try to remain as clear as possible when explaining what I do and do not mean when refuting the idea of apologetic as (literary) genre.

The most important term that demands clarification is genre. What is a genre? Different people may respond with very different answers. One may take the etymological root and answer that genre, taken directly from the French, is a “type” or “kind,” but what type or kind? Are genres differentiated by form? By content? By exigence? Take, for example, Joseph Heller’s masterpiece *Catch-22*. If one considers formal concerns most important, one may answer that *Catch-22* is a novel. If one considers content concerns most important, one may answer that it is historical fiction. If one considers rhetorical concerns most important, one may answer that it is satire. None of these answers is incorrect, but each highlights a different nuance of genre. Such questions exert a significant impact if one brings genre to bear in comparative studies. Does one read *Catch-22* alongside other works of historical fiction, such as *Gone with the Wind* or *Things Fall Apart*? Or alongside other satires, such as *Animal Farm* and *Candide*?

This issue is of vital importance for the study of apologetic. Ware and Linkugel’s watershed article was subtitled “On the Generic Criticism of Apologia,” and in it they asserted that apologetic constitutes a distinct genre. This has been followed by virtually all rhetorical scholars. But what did they mean by calling apologetic a genre? Rhetorical scholars care little for form, since they affirm that form is primarily used for classification and “If the history of ancient rhetoric teaches us anything, it is that the degree to which a discipline or method atrophies and declines is directly proportional to the complexity of the taxonomies it generates” (Conley 1979, 52–53).⁵³ Instead, acknowledging Bitzer’s renowned essay, “The Rhetorical Situation” (1968),⁵⁴ they adopt a more functional approach, anchoring

52. A distillation of the remarks in this section can be found in Knapp 2013, 262–67.

53. I should note that Conley also indicts rhetorical genre theory for “the tendency ... to proliferate into useless and tiresome taxonomies” (1979, 53), but this is predominantly because he argues that it continues to connote “a notion of fixed and immutable forms” (1979, 48).

54. Although so much rhetorical genre theory builds off Bitzer’s ideas, it should be remarked that Bitzer never overtly discusses genre in this article.

the concept of genre in the situation of the discourse (cf. Harrell and Linkugel 1978, 274).⁵⁵ Thus, a rhetorical genre, which may or may not include a formal component,⁵⁶ derives its essence from its exigence, that is, the circumstances that birthed the specific discourse. Since apologetic—one's defense in response to specific accusations—is also defined by its exigence, apologetic certainly qualifies as a rhetorical genre. Indeed, apologetic is often used by rhetorical scholars as the exemplary rhetorical genre, and that its exigence serves as the primary defining characteristic can be seen in Kruse's definition of apologia: "public discourse produced whenever a prominent person attempts to repair his character if it has been directly or indirectly damaged by overt charges, or rumors or allegations" (Kruse 1977, 13; cf. Kruse 1981, 280).

Apologetic epitomizes the idea of rhetorical genre, yet I still object to the label of genre for apologetic within the field of ancient Near Eastern studies. This is because scholars of the ancient Near East tend not to take a rhetorical approach to genre; instead they (consciously or otherwise) adopt a structuralist approach. According to structuralist genre theory, a genre is the point of intersection between theme and form (Genette 1992, 73; see also Bawarshi and Reiff 2010, 17–20; Frye 1957, 94). Theme is essential, but the implications of form are more interesting, for when one introduces form into the definition, a genre becomes an artificial human construct.⁵⁷ The famous genre theorist Gérard Genette, for example, places genre as the most specific category (except for subgenre) on his hierarchy of literary categorization—genre is the historical realization of a transhistorical phenomenon. In his influential essay *The Architext*, he writes, "I deny only that a final generic position, and it alone, can be defined in terms that exclude all historicity. For at whatever level of generality one places oneself, the phenomenon of genre inextricably merges the phenomena—among others—of nature and of culture" (1992, 68–69).

55. Bitzer writes that a rhetorical situation is a complex of three constituent parts; exigence, audience, and constraints (1968, 6–8). Like most others, I focus on the exigence, since audience and constraints affect the discourse at a lower level.

56. Those who do discuss the formal aspect of rhetorical genres tend to conceptualize genre in a more malleable way, and still subjugate form to situation. For example, Downey devotes an article to the evolution of the genre, but the common link between its various historical realizations is the situation. She writes, "Given the pervasiveness of apologia as a viable and recurrent communicative response to an enduring human exigency, examination of the *functions* and not just the *forms* of apologia is warranted" (1993, 43). Similarly, Jamieson writes, "Genres should not be viewed as static forms but as evolving phenomena. One should approach study of genres with a Darwinian rather than a Platonic perspective. While traditional genres may color rhetoric they do not ossify it" (1973, 168).

57. Unless one adopts a neoclassical approach to genre, in which certain transhistorical forms are assumed. Such forms are necessarily broad, however, and reduce the usefulness of genre in the neoclassical approach to only taxonomy. Cf. Bawarshi and Reiff 2010, 14–17.

This view of genre, which I designate literary genre, is pervasive in the literature of the ancient Near East. I submit that it was introduced by Hermann Gunkel, whose groundbreaking *Einleitung in die Psalmen* in 1933 ushered in a new era of genre research in biblical studies. Although Gunkel preceded the rise of bona fide structuralism in literary theory, his work anticipated it in many respects. Gunkel outlined three criteria for establishing genres (*Gattungen*) in Psalms. Two of the three pertain to theme (“a common treasury of *thoughts and moods*”) and form (“that all of the individual pieces belonging to the genre should indeed be associated relatively clearly by their common ‘language related to form’” [1998, 16]). The other criterion is historical situatedness (“one may only assemble together those poems which as a group belong to a specific *occasion in the worship service*, or at least derive from one” [1998, 16]).

This understanding of genre permeated biblical studies and eventually began to wield influence in other arenas of ancient Near Eastern studies as well. Scholars have applied Gunkel’s theory to the literature of the ancient Near East (particularly the Hebrew Bible) with excellent results. Gunkel’s contributions to the study of Genesis and Psalms birthed a new method of interpretation, form criticism, which became so intertwined with Gunkel’s *Gattungen* that genre and form became essentially synonymous in many standard works in the field.⁵⁸ This methodology investigates ancient literary genres in order to inform the reader of the text’s historical setting (see Harrington 1981, 69–70). Because a given genre is an historically situated realization of themes and forms, it may be used inductively to draw universally valid conclusions about any given example from that genre.⁵⁹ Genre is both descriptive and prescriptive; it describes insofar as it delineates the characteristics of a group of given texts, but it also prescribes insofar as authors employ known forms in their work.⁶⁰

58. This is especially so in biblical studies. In his *Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*, John Collins equates the two, writing, “Gunkel drew attention to the importance of literary form or genre” (2004, 17). In an early introductory work, Lawrence Boadt described one step of form criticism as follows: “*Naming the form used*... This is often referred to as naming the literary genre of the unit” (1984, 85). One exception to this appears in Gene Tucker’s primer on form criticism, where he defines genre more situationally than formally (1971, 2–3). Unfortunately, however, Tucker never defines genre more specifically than “literary type” (1971, 1). Although Tucker employs a more nuanced understanding of genre than many of his colleagues, he still works from a structuralist perspective, writing that structure and genre are “*distinct but inseparable*” (1971, 12).

59. For the connection between genre and inductive reasoning, see Genette 1992, 65–66; also Todorov 1974, 957.

60. Most structuralists would take issue with the idea that concepts of genre that focus on form serve as nothing more than classification schemes (cf. the above comment by Conley). Although genre is used to classify, the formal component also, right or wrong, creates constraints on the discourse because authors subscribe to established genres.

Thus far, all is well. That scholarship of the ancient Near East is suffused with a latent structuralist mentality poses no problems; indeed, I submit that it has served the field admirably—especially when used consciously, by those with an awareness of generic issues.⁶¹ But we encounter a problem when we return to the focus of this study, apologetic. Several scholars have casually referred to apologetic as an ancient Near Eastern (literary) genre, and used this putative fact to draw broad conclusions. But in the ancient Near East, apologetic did not constitute a genre in any structuralist sense. Ancient Near Eastern apologies do share many similar themes as a product of their comparable exigences and ideologies, but formally there is little, if any, similarity among them. Most are autobiographical, but the two famous biblical examples are not. Some appear to have been drafted as separate compositions (such as the apologies of Hattusili, Esarhaddon, or Darius), while others are integrated into more formulaic royal inscriptions (such as the apology of Nabonidus). Attempts to establish a common structure are forced,⁶² and if one were to try to impose one structure upon all the apologies, the enterprise would surely fall apart entirely. There is no formal link among these texts that cannot easily be explained by the common circumstance that inspired them, namely, the need for the rulers to defend their legitimacy in light of the suspicious succession.

To summarize, the term “genre” can have significantly different connotations depending on what approach one takes. Viewed from the perspective of literary genre theory with its structuralist underpinnings, a genre is a culturally bound, emic category to which an author conforms. Viewed from a rhetorical perspective, a genre is a transhistorical, etic category that is dictated by the rhetorical situation

61. For example, Vanstiphout, in an important paper (“Some Thoughts on Genre in Mesopotamian Literature”) delivered to the 1985 Assyriological *rencontre* on cuneiform literature, brought this point to the fore. After recognizing the significance of “the relationship between theoretical and historical genres, or between genres, types, and modes,” he introduced his fruitful study of historical/literary genres thus: “there is some consensus about what constitutes a historical genre: a historical group or family of literary [sic] texts, governed by and perhaps (partly) generated by sets of rules, of which rules some formal constellation is clearly dominant, thus defining the genre. Therefore, in any literature the study of genres must be approached not *ante rem* (normatively), not *post rem* (taxonomically), but in *re* (in its historical realisation)” (1986, 1). Vanstiphout’s paper is informed by genre theory, and he consequently avoided such errors as I describe in the following pages.

62. I object even to Hoffner’s comparison of the structures of the two Hittite apologies (1975, 51). The descriptions of the noble antecedents bear little resemblance to each other, and the edicts could not be more dissimilar. This leaves us with only a description of the predecessor’s illegitimacy, the coup to overthrow him, and the mercy of the protagonist. We need not posit any “general pattern” to describe why these should parallel each other; it’s a simple chronological narrative. Likewise, Ishida’s attempt to uncover this structure in the apologies of Esarhaddon and Solomon is not persuasive (see Ishida 1991). What other structure might one use to describe a royal succession?

to which the author responds. In scholarship of the ancient Near East, literary genre theory has dominated.

The misapplication of the category of literary genre to ancient Near Eastern apologies goes beyond a simple semantic indiscretion; it has led to specious conclusions. Scholars have taken a transhistorical phenomenon (apologetic), given it an historical label (genre), and then drawn historical conclusions from it. I will here demonstrate three types of errors that this genre confusion has occasioned.

First, the reliance on formal criteria for literary genres creates rigid barriers for the inclusion and exclusion of texts, which often clash with the texts' rhetorical purposes. This apparent conflict can lead to either of two erroneous outcomes, both of which can be illustrated through previous work comparing the apologies of Hattusili III and David. Herbert Wolf's 1967 Brandeis dissertation did a marvelous job of ushering in the study of ancient Near Eastern apologetic, but it brought along some unfortunate baggage. Wolf identifies the apologetic aspects of the two texts and therefore assumes that they share a literary genre, and thus he attempts a form-critical study. But his comparison falls short despite his best efforts, which he seems to foresee himself. He first struggles to deal with the major obstacle to his form-critical work, that Hattusili's apology is an autobiographical royal inscription while David's is a biographical hero tale. Anticipating this objection, Wolf writes of the David saga, "I feel that the material can still be an apology in the same sense as the Hittite text if it contains a sufficient number of similar elements of form. The *Sitz-im-Leben* and motifs used outweigh the difference between 'autobiography' and 'biography'" (1967, 121–22). But later he acknowledges that even this does not resolve the problem when he concludes, "It might be objected that I have leaned too heavily on content at the expense of true 'formal' distinctions. Many similar experiences befell the two kings. Yet, if one removes content from all consideration, there is nothing left to discuss and form becomes a meaningless abstraction.... Admittedly, there is a subjective element involved in form criticism, but this is unavoidable" (1967, 161). Wolf could have obviated these flaws in his work by fixing the theory underlying the study. He correctly observed the exigence common to Hattusili and David, but then attempted to force the two texts into one mold instead of recognizing the different means of responding to this exigence. This highly suspect application of the comparative method yielded many questionable results, some of which will be discussed below.

J. Randall Short's recent monograph, *The Surprising Election and Confirmation of King David* (2010), demonstrates the opposite reaction to an overreliance on formal criteria. Short, too, compares the texts of Hattusili and David, but he does not detect a formal similarity between them. In fact, Short devotes an entire chapter⁶³ to debunking the formal comparison of Hattusili and David done by

63. "The History of David's Rise and the Apology of Hattušili – A Reappraisal" (2010, 51–98).

Wolf and especially Hoffner, who presented a more accessible “general pattern ... [of the] essential structure” (Hoffner 1975, 51) evident in the “tradition of royal apologies” (Hoffner 1975, 50). This reappraisal is correct insofar as the texts do not share significant formal features. But then Short throws the baby out with the bathwater, concluding from this that the History of David’s Rise cannot be an apology (2010, 87). The rest of the volume is dedicated to reinterpreting the David story, explaining away or ignoring all apologetic elements along the way.⁶⁴

Both Wolf and Short work from the premises that (1) apologetic is a genre and (2) each genre is characterized by a common form; ergo (3) apologetic is characterized by a common form.⁶⁵ When the two texts under consideration undermine these premises, Wolf responds by forcing a nonexistent formal connection on the two⁶⁶ and Short responds by removing the label of apology from one of the texts. Wolf is overly inclusive; Short overly exclusive. Had they a more appropriate understanding of the nature of apologetic, however, they could recognize the similar situation that provoked the texts and allow the apologists to respond via unique

64. I respond to Short’s methodology more fully in my article, “David and Hattushili III: The Impact of Genre and a Response to J. Randall Short” (Knapp 2013), which incorporates many of the ideas in this section.

Short’s work suffers from more than just a misapplication of genre theory. He seems confused about the nature of his own work; his interpretation of the text seems in line with Childs’s canonical criticism, but he offers it as a response to historical-critical work. Worse, Short inveighs against historical-critical scholars, but does not meet them on their own terms. His in-depth analysis of the History of David’s Rise involves only thirteen verses (out of twenty-one chapters), and he uncritically uses the Masoretic Text without regard for the textual history of Samuel, a move that McKenzie (2011) rightly calls “indefensible in post-Qumran biblical scholarship.” That is, Short essentially jettisons all the evidence that supports the opposing view, then proclaims that his opponents have no evidence. For a more complete response to his work, see McKenzie’s review (2011), with which I agree in full, or my own response (Knapp 2013).

65. I have no problem with either premise 1 or 2 when seen independently. But one cannot work from both of these premises, because they involve antithetical understandings of genre. As genre is understood by Gunkel and most scholars of the ancient Near East, premise 1 is not valid but premise 2 is. As genre is understood by rhetorical scholars, premise 2 is not valid but premise 1 is. Under no coherent system are both premises valid.

66. Ironically, while attempting to force a formal connection between the apologies of Hattusili and David, Wolf neglects two apologies that are more comparable to that of Hattusili, namely, those of Esarhaddon and Nabonidus. He acknowledges some parallels to Hattusili’s apology in the latter two texts, but then summarily dismisses them because, “In spite of the fact that these texts contain important parallels to the Apology [of Hattusili], the differences are more striking. Even though they follow Hattusili by six and seven centuries, still they fall far short of the historical calibre of the Apology” (1967, 115). Fortunately, Tadmor and other Assyriologists later corrected this oversight.

forms.⁶⁷ The value of comparing these texts lies not in finding explicit connections between the two—since presumably none exist—but in using the thematic parallels that originated from similar (but not identical) ideological contexts to illuminate the character of each text (see McCarter 1980, 498).⁶⁸

A second problem caused by treating apologetic as a literary genre, which is partially a corollary of the first, is that it has led some scholars to suggest dependence between texts that probably had no direct connection with one another. Here again Wolf is a prime offender, as he spends the bulk of his study searching for the Hittite origins of aspects of the David material. The first of the two main chapters of Wolf's study establishes the nature of the Autobiography of Hattusili as a "dynastic defense" (1967, 20–22); the second attempts to reveal sufficient formal similarities with the apology of David in 1 Sam 15–2 Sam 8 to determine a connection between the two texts.⁶⁹

Hayim Tadmor commits the same methodological error, to a much lesser extent but in a more influential work. When introducing some Assyrian examples of apologetic for consideration, Tadmor suggests that apologies were unknown

67. Another interesting example of this thinking appears in the work of Ishida (esp. Ishida 1991). Like Wolf, Ishida acknowledges the exigence that makes two apologies worth studying in light of each other: "Esarhaddon's apology serves as good comparative material for the Succession Narrative, since both Solomon and Esarhaddon assumed their offices under similar circumstances and their common problem was obtaining an appointment as royal successor by overruling primogeniture" (1991, 168). But he still feels compelled to justify his treatment of the two together, which he attempts through a long demonstration that they share a "general structure" (1991, 173). Ishida labels their mutual genre "Royal Historical Writings of an Apologetic Nature" (1991, 173), which strikes me as overcomplicated.

68. Short summarily dismisses any thematic comparison of the two texts: "Although McCarter minimizes the relevance of 'purely formal elements' and concentrates his analysis on 'thematic parallels' between HDR [the History of David's Rise] and the Apology of Hattusili, formal elements and thematic concerns cannot be so easily divorced. Consideration of the 'essential structure' or 'formal elements' that Hoffner has identified—and that McCarter and others who accept his conclusions seem to have missed or overlooked—necessarily engages us in an evaluation of the central 'thematic concerns' of any particular text" (2010, 56–57). This goes too far, and one cannot help but deduce that Short's conclusions are driving his argument here. The thematic parallels between Hattusili's and David's apologies are patently obvious, as one can see in McCarter 1980, 497–99 or simply by reading the texts themselves.

69. To be fair, Wolf never explicitly claims that the David material was dependent on Hattusili's autobiography. The closest he comes is the rhetorical question, "Could it be that the similarities between the two texts are sheer coincidence, or was there some literary dependence?" (1967, 161). But given that this question follows forty-three pages of outlining similarities between the two, and that it precedes a section titled "Other Evidence of Hittite Influence in Samuel" (1967, 162–69), and that Wolf includes an appendix further reinforcing the similarities between the two texts (1967, 176–78), one need not struggle to read between the lines. Others certainly interpreted Wolf in this way (McCarter 1980, 498 n. 22).

in Mesopotamia until the genre was borrowed from the west: "... the genre of apology was at home in the countries west of the Euphrates. The Neo-Assyrian samples of this genre were relatively novel in Mesopotamian historical writing and could be regarded as further evidence of the Western impact upon Assyria. Such a genre was foreign to the rather rigid and formalistic traditions of Southern Mesopotamia" (1983, 56).⁷⁰ Although he prudently refrains from suggesting that Esarhaddon read Hattusili's autobiography in his leisure time, he still requires some mechanism to explain the correspondence between the Hittite and Assyrian texts.

Both Wolf and Tadmor recognize a connection among the various apologies but misidentify the source of the connection. The cause of this misidentification is that both treat apologetic as a literary genre, which is a cultural artifact (see Jameson 1981, 106). The apologies of Hattusili, David, and Esarhaddon share similar themes not because they are all historical realizations of a monolithic literary tradition but because these rulers all faced the same circumstances of having to defend their legitimacy after an irregular succession.⁷¹

A third problem that arises from treating apologetic as a literary genre is that it leads to homogenizing the texts and to failure to recognize each example's singularity. Jameson writes, "Genres are essentially literary *institutions*, or social contracts between a writer and a specific public" (1981, 106). Writers employ certain literary genres to aid their audiences in interpretation. When scholars conceptualize apologetic in this way, they tend to treat it inductively rather than deductively—that is, they use their assumptions about what an apology should look like to read into each text, rather than working from the texts to characterize the phenomenon (see Campbell and Jamieson 1978, 22–23).⁷² One employs literary categories to help texts become mutually illuminating, but not to divest each of its

70. Tadmor's discussion of the genre of apology is further complicated by his insistence on the autobiographical nature of apologetic (though he makes an exception for the Davidic material). He implies that although early royal inscriptions are all written from a first-person perspective, those that qualify as apologetic have a more literary flavor and include true "autobiographical elements" (1983, 36).

71. It should be noted that not all who have written on the subject have misapplied the generic nature of apologetic in this way. McCarter, drawing a comparison between Hattusili and David not entirely unlike that of Wolf, avoids the pitfall. After arguing against the attempts to find a common form among the apologies, he concludes, "On the other hand the apology of Hattushilish demonstrates the potential for an elaborate development of this genre in the general cultural milieu in which the history of David's rise was composed, and the striking similarity of themes in the two compositions is a clue to the original character of the Israelite narrative" (1980, 498). In a recent comparative study of the David material and Neo-Babylonian apologies, Dick also recognizes the problem and announces emphatically, "I propose that these similarities do not argue for any literary dependence whatsoever" (2004, 6).

72. This is particularly discomfiting because it provides scholars of the ancient Near East (especially biblicists) with a weapon with which to indulge their parallelomaniacal

individuality. But an apology, as a response to accusations, is not a strictly literary work—it must work with the particular situation that elicited it.

One can point to manifold examples of this tendency to homogenize the sundry ancient Near Eastern apologies. One example appears in Jeremy Hutton's treatment of the Solomonic Succession Narrative (SN). Like Wolf, Short, and others, Hutton explicitly performs a "form-critical examination" (Hutton 2009, 192) in light of the apologetic pattern formulated by Hoffner and Ishida. In this examination he must find an example of the element of the unworthy predecessor so that the pattern of SN aligns to that of other ancient Near Eastern apologies. He locates it in the anti-Davidic polemic of 2 Sam 11–12: "David's coercive tryst with—or rape of—Bathsheba and his ruthless murder of her husband Uriah must comprise an 'evil act of a predecessor'" (Hutton 2009, 194–95). He therefore includes 2 Sam 11:1–12:25* with 1 Kgs 1–2 in the complex of SN with no further justification.⁷³ This reasoning betrays confusion about the nature of apologetic. The unworthy predecessor is not a requisite element of every apology but a motif employed only when it applies to the individual circumstances of the person being defended (and typically in situations where a ruler usurps power from an incumbent, which Solomon did not). Undermining David's legitimacy would not have benefited Solomon. On the contrary, it would have weakened his own dynastic claim since he emphasized his status as David's son. Hutton's treatment of SN fails to recognize the particularity of Solomon's situation, instead attempting to assimilate it to a perceived model.

The inductive extrapolations of apologetic apply perhaps most easily to the Tel Dan Inscription of Hazael, if only because its fragmentary nature leaves it ambiguous in many respects and open to various interpretations. One such issue is the pervasive mistranslation of *qdm* in line 4 of the text as "previously." Although the genesis of this error lay simply in the difficulty of Old Aramaic, it found widespread acceptance largely because it complies with one of the structural elements of apologies identified by Hoffner (1975, 51), that of the unworthy predecessor.⁷⁴ Read this way, the Tel Dan Inscription purports that the king of Samaria invaded Aram "previously," that is, during the time of Hazael's predecessor. Irvine states that the rhetoric of the text "strives to glorify Hazael's reign by contrasting it with the dismal situation of his predecessor(s)" (2005, 346; see also Na'aman 2000b,

propensities. If one assumes X must be like Y, one will begin with an interpretation and work backward to match the text rather than letting the text speak for itself.

73. Though it is not germane to the discussion here, I would also argue that attributing these passages to the same literary horizon seems objectionable on several grounds; see §6.2.2.

74. As I discuss in §2.1, the unworthy predecessor is a motif common to many royal apologies, but it is not a requisite structural element.

97–98).⁷⁵ As I have shown elsewhere, however, *qdm* here cannot mean “previously” (Knapp 2014a); instead Hazael describes an invasion that followed the death of his predecessor and justified his own assumption of the throne.⁷⁶ Here the misuse of apologetic as a literary genre has contributed to a significant misinterpretation of the text.

Another example of this problem from the Tel Dan Inscription involves its date and origin. Hayim Tadmor argues that the Neo-Assyrian apologies were written not early in the reigns of the pertinent kings, as many assume, but “in conjunction with the appointment of the successor—a crucial moment in the life of every king and especially of those whose own coming to the throne was not entirely in order” (1983, 37–38).⁷⁷ Suriano cites this in his treatment of the Tel Dan Inscription and asserts that apologies are composed, if not at the outset of a king’s reign, then “at the time of appointing his heir” (2007, 173). Since he finds the earlier date unlikely, Suriano suggests that one might locate the *Sitz im Leben* of the Tel Dan Inscription in Hazael’s appointment of his son, Bir-Hadad, as his successor (2007, 175). While this suggestion does not carry major ramifications, it still seems too conjectural for a period about which we have very little information.

The preceding examples should suffice to demonstrate three significant problems that arise from considering apologetic as a literary genre—the rigid boundaries it creates between members and nonmembers of the category; the tendency to see examples of apologetic as having directly influenced one another despite vast chronological and cultural gaps; and the tendency to homogenize the texts by ascribing individual characteristics of the apologetic category to each particular instantiation thereof. All of these problems stem from transforming apologetic, a transhistorical phenomenon marked by the common exigence of defending oneself from accusations, into a historicized form to which all apologists must subscribe. Treating apologetic as an historically realized institution forces the implication that the apologists themselves were familiar with the genre and deliberately employed it for the purpose of their defenses. I argue that this is not the case. Literary genres are artificial human constructs; apologetic is a natural human disposition.

75. I should note that Irvine does not himself use “apologetic” to describe the Tel Dan Inscription. But his description of the text puts it in this category, and he does call it “skillful propaganda” (2005, 346). For a more explicit link between the translation “previously” and the apologetic nature of the text, see Suriano 2007, 172, esp. nn. 61, 63.

76. Irvine gets this latter part of the rhetoric correct. “The vague claim in lines 3b–4a about a previous Israelite invasion has a twofold effect: it continues the derogation of Hazael’s predecessor(s), and it justifies Hazael’s own aggression by presenting it as ‘payback’ and thus as an essentially defensive measure” (Irvine 2005, 347).

77. Incidentally, I challenge this argument regarding Esarhaddon’s apology, his prime example. See below, §8.4; also Knapp forthcoming a.

Having established that it is not a literary genre as is generally supposed, what should we do with the category of apologetic? We could discard it altogether and seek to analyze these texts from other perspectives. This would be an overreaction, however, for I intend to show throughout this study that apologetic remains a useful term. Alternatively, we could qualify apologetic as a *rhetorical* genre to avoid the historical pitfalls of viewing it structurally. This is an adequate response since it works well from a theoretical standpoint and preserves the term. But I fear this may be overly ambitious since it would involve redefining genre as it is most commonly understood by ancient Near Eastern scholars (and thus bringing its definition in line with the way genre is understood by scholars of rhetoric). Therefore I prefer a third solution, which is to explore what category apologetic fits into within structuralist theory, if not genre. This has the advantage of both preserving the term and working within the purview of ancient Near Eastern studies.

Fortunately, just such a category exists. Apologetic most properly functions not as a literary genre, but as a literary mode (or mood).⁷⁸ John Frow writes,

... modes are understood as the extensions of certain genres beyond specific and time-bound formal structures to a broader specification of 'tone' ... Rather than standing alone, modes are usually qualifications or modifications of particular genres (gothic thriller, pastoral elegy, satirical sitcom), and in this respect they resemble the first term in Guérard's classificatory scheme (dramatic lyric, lyrical drama, epic drama ...); they specify thematic features and certain forms and modalities of speech, but not the formal structures or even the semiotic medium through which the text is to be realised. (Frow 2006, 65)

To draw an analogy from one of Frow's examples, from a modal perspective apologetic is like satire. Heller's *Catch-22* is by form a novel, by mode a satire. One should not regard satire as a genre from a structuralist perspective because satire is not an historically bound phenomenon. Just as satire remains a useful category in that it allows one to analyze the rhetoric employed for and the situations that occasioned the discourse, so does apologetic. Narrowing the scope to royal inscriptions from the ancient Near East, acknowledging the modal nature of apologetic allows the reader to explore the common ways these rulers used the ideology of their societies to defend their legitimacy while avoiding unnecessary claims of direct influence from one text to another. Moreover, we can make stronger historical claims about each individual text, since we understand that a given text was

78. Note that, although he focused on the study of historical (= literary) genres, Vanstiphout recognized the importance of modes and the distinction between theoretical and historical genres (1986, 1).

composed for a specific ruler in specific circumstances and not according to some culturally accepted apologetic template.

Acknowledging the modal nature of apologetic also allows us to preserve the category of literary genre for describing and analyzing texts, which is crucial in some cases. The literary genre of most of the texts under discussion is royal inscription, a text composed to praise some achievement of the king, subscribing to certain formal characteristics such as first-person (or occasionally third-person) perspective and an introduction providing the king's lineage and epithets.⁷⁹ "Royal inscription" is itself an imperfect term, since its boundaries are not always entirely clear, but it does not pose particular problems within the confines of this study.⁸⁰ Most importantly, as a known literary genre it provides a category that unites form and theme, which allows us to observe how the rulers in question manipulated the genre to serve their ends.⁸¹ Various literary subgenres of royal inscription appear, such as Hazael's victory inscription or Esarhaddon's building inscription; these will be discussed in the pertinent chapters.⁸²

My purpose in this section is not to introduce a new generic vocabulary into ancient Near Eastern studies, but to clarify how classification into literary genre can and cannot be used in textual analysis. Apologetic, as a mode, remains divorced from the discussion of literary genre. Although this deliberately avoids the jargon of rhetorical genre studies, I acknowledge my indebtedness to the latter field for this study. In a way, treating apologetic as a mode, which specifies certain themes and situations, simply adopts the concept of rhetorical genre and describes it with structuralist terminology.

79. For a description of royal inscriptions, see the entry "Königsinschriften" in *RIA* 6 (= Edzard 1984; Renger 1984). Although Edzard and Renger focus on Sumerian and Akkadian royal inscriptions, respectively, much of the discussion obtains for the broader ancient Near Eastern cultural sphere.

80. Johannes Renger, one of the foremost authorities on royal inscriptions, writes, "so bin ich mir der mangelnden Schärfe dieses Terminus wohl bewußt," though he continues to use the term for convenience ("Ich benutze hier die Bezeichnung Königsinschrift daher der Bequemlichkeit wegen"; 1986, 109). I am not quite so pessimistic about the term, although his point is well taken.

81. Renger focuses on the formal characteristics of royal inscriptions, but one of his main points of emphasis is that the inscriptions follow an overall structure but the scribes have some leeway within this structure to compose (1986, 111). As he notes in the conclusion to one paper, when assessing royal inscriptions one must always take into account the balance between preservation and innovation (1986, 127–28).

82. For discussion of some of the classifications of royal inscriptions, see Galter 1986, with reference to previous literature (including Renger 1984).

1.6 SUMMARY

I began this chapter by surveying the scholarship of ancient Near Eastern apologetic texts, showing that while much helpful work has been done, there is often a gap between the explicit understanding of apologetic treated by genre theorists and the implicit understanding evident in ancient Near Eastern studies. The latter frequently begin with flawed assumptions about the nature of apologetic, which in turn lead to erroneous conclusions. I responded to this by addressing three points on which previous scholarship has been inconsistent, and in each case I employed rhetorical scholarship to establish a theoretical basis for future apologetic study. First, I showed that apologies are not confined to particular contexts, such as a legal or political situation. This is true of apologies everywhere, but especially of those in the ancient Near East, where politics, religion, and law are often inseparable. Second, I clarified the essence of apologetic, which is that apologies are defensive texts in which the apologist must defend himself from accusations of misconduct or illegitimacy. Finally, I demonstrated the problems inherent to the trend, pervasive in ancient Near Eastern studies, to identify apologies on the basis of formal criteria. Apologies find expression in any number of literary genres; exigence, not form or structure, serves as the diagnostic test for identifying apologetic discourse. Equipped with this understanding of the nature of apologetic, we can move forward to discuss how royal apologies manifested in the ancient Near East.

CHAPTER TWO

THE RHETORIC OF LEGITIMATE SUCCESSION

IN THE PREVIOUS chapter we arrived at the following definition of apologetic: Apologetic is propaganda produced as defense against attacks upon a person's character or conduct. It was also shown that no single context, medium, or literary form is common to all apologetic discourse; instead, apologies derive their character from the exigence of responding to accusations. This complicates the study of apologies from the ancient world, because the historian usually has access only to the (written form of the) discourse itself, without external sources to illuminate it. Thus the apologetic nature of a text must be determined from the situation that elicited it, but that situation can only be determined from the contents of the text. In short, everything comes down to rhetorical analysis.¹

In this chapter I will examine rhetoric that appears frequently in apologies from the ancient Near East, and work from there to establish a body of texts for closer examination in the rest of the study. I will also introduce several texts that have apologetic elements that will not receive a full study in this volume. I will then introduce my method for analyzing texts in the following chapters.

2.1 MOTIFS THAT OCCUR FREQUENTLY IN ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN ROYAL APOLOGIES

Apologists from all parts of the ancient Near East faced many of the same quandaries of how to legitimate a candidate with no obvious natural claim to the throne. It should not surprise, therefore, that many of the same themes appear in multiple apologies. One must beware of concluding too much from such repetition, however. I contend that the recurrence of these motifs is not a product of later authors consciously drawing on the work of earlier apologies; it seems unlikely that the content of most apologies diffused outside of the societies in which they originated

1. In most cases. In some situations, external evidence provides insight into a text's apologetic nature. The best example of this is the Tel Dan Inscription, the defensive nature of which is made apparent by the information about Hazael furnished in biblical and Assyrian texts (see §7.1). In many cases, though—particularly with the biblical apologies—we lack any pertinent information outside the apologetic text itself, so rhetorical analysis is the sole means of determining the text's exigence.

(until the last few hundred years, of course).² These motifs, then, are not exclusive to any one society of the ancient Near East; they sprang up from the cultural and ideological similarities shared by these societies. At the same time, though, the use of such motifs to establish a ruler's legitimacy is not common to all human society. Thus the specific rhetoric of legitimation that emerges here provides a glimpse into the ancient Near Eastern *Kulturkreis*. It is culturally situated, not in a single culture but in a broader conglomerate of cultures.³

One must also remember that the motifs were included on the basis of a king's particular circumstances. Thus one should not immediately dismiss some aspect of an apology simply because it is part of a broader motif. I submit that royal apologies are better sources of historical information than they have often received credit for being; yes, they have a thick propagandistic veneer, but they rarely resort to generic tropes.

Moreover, most of these motifs occur in all sorts of royal inscriptions, not only those that feature an apologetic mode. There is nothing exclusively apologetic about them. Some, such as the unworthy predecessor, appear frequently in apologetic texts but rarely in nonapologetic texts, but others, such as the concept of the divine election of the king, are ubiquitous in royal propaganda. But the more mundane motifs tend to appear in apologies in atypical ways and with special emphasis. For example, any Hittite king might refer in passing to his divine election, but Hattusili III constantly brings up Ishtar's special selection of him during his childhood and her providence for him throughout his life as she groomed him for kingship.

The first three of these motifs (divine election, royal prerogative/affiliation, and popular acclamation) I refer to as the great "triad of legitimacy" because they occur with such frequency and emphasis in the apologies. Any or all of the three could serve to override the regular order of succession, and they were utilized by

2. Interestingly, the two apologies that presumably had apologetic material to draw on are almost entirely dissimilar from their predecessors. Hattusili probably knew the Proclamation of Telipinu (which circulated in the thirteenth century; §3.2), yet the Autobiography has a far different character than the Proclamation (*pace* Hoffner 1975). Likewise Solomon must have been familiar with the Traditions of David's Rise and Reign, but the tone of the Succession Narrative could not resemble the David narrative less.

3. That is, when examining royal ideologies from various cultures one expects to find diversity with culturally specific (emic) issues and commonality with nonculturally specific (etic) issues. But when delimiting the study to one *Kulturkreis*, such as the ancient Near East, one finds a middle ground of some commonality with culturally specific issues even among societies with no linear cultural connections. A study such as this can illuminate certain culturally determined ideological concepts that link the various civilizations of the ancient Near East but separate this unit from other *Kulturkreise*. A complete study of ancient Near Eastern royal ideology is beyond the scope of the present study and remains a desideratum in the field; for one older treatment, see Frankfort 1978.

a number of kings who lacked an obvious claim to the throne. They are joined by a fourth motif (military success) that legitimated kings throughout the ancient Near East, though the latter appears less often in apologies for reasons I discuss below. The following six motifs are more specific; they could not be applied to any ruler but only to one whose individual circumstances called for the particular motif.⁴ Below I provide brief descriptions of each motif, followed by examples from apologies of the ancient Near East. The examples are neither exhaustive nor comprehensive; they only serve as glimpses into how such motifs appeared. The motifs often saturate long texts and, as such, do not permit themselves to be excerpted easily.

*Divine election.*⁵ Any ancient Near Eastern monarch, however regular his succession to the throne may have been, owed his power to the god(s). The perception of divine approbation empowered rulers, and the dissipation of this perception could erode a ruler's support. As the foundation of all royal legitimacy, it was thus inevitable that, lacking a natural right to the throne, several kings claimed a supernatural right. Indeed, with the possible exceptions of Telipinu and Solomon (cf. §§3.4, 6.4), every ruler under discussion here emphasized this (and one could point to several more examples).

As noted above, divine election occurs commonly in all sorts of royal inscriptions, but its use in apologetic inscriptions tends to be much more emphasized than in inscriptions that do not seem overly concerned with establishing legitimacy. In the latter, the gods are typically acknowledged in stock formulae, for example as patrons of the king in titularies. The apologetic motif of divine election involves invocation of the gods in more creative ways. This motif often takes the form of a god acknowledging the piety and humility of the man and therefore elevating him over his countrymen (see especially the examples from Nabopolassar and Cyrus

4. Herein lies one of the problems with Hoffner's and Ishida's methods of identifying apologies according to structure. They both include a description of "the unworthy predecessor" as a crucial component of the apologetic form (Hoffner 1975, 51; Ishida 1991, 166–67, 173) without regard for the individual king's circumstances. Thus Ishida, who deals with the apologies of Esarhaddon and Solomon—both of whom succeeded their father and thus would have undermined themselves by using the rhetoric of the unworthy predecessor—essentially treats Esarhaddon's brothers as the "predecessor" and, in my opinion, misinterprets the depiction of David in the Succession Narrative as predominantly negative (1991, 170–72; similarly Hutton is forced to include the Bathsheba story in his reconstructed Succession Narrative to allow for the existence of the unworthy predecessor component [2009, 192–96]). On the contrary, neither Esarhaddon nor Solomon incorporated the motif of the unworthy predecessor, but that of unworthy rivals—a far more appropriate rhetorical strategy.

5. For remarks on the typical presence of the motif of divine election in Assyrian royal inscriptions, see Tadmor 1981, 25–26.

below); elsewhere the apologists simply record the deity's choice without any explanation of the human's credentials. The key element is simply divine support.

- “Ishtar, my lady, gave the kingship of Hatti to me. So I became king, and she took me, a prince, and Ishtar, my lady, released me for kingship.” Autobiography of Hattusili, iv 47–49
- “[And] Hadad [ma]de m[e] king—me!” Tel Dan Inscription of Hazael, lines 4–5
- “I was a man of ‘Anah⁶ and Ba’lshamayn [raised] me and stood beside me, and Ba’lshamayn made me king over Hazrach.” Zakkur Inscription, lines 2–4 (translation following COS 2.35:155)
- “[Aššur], the father of the gods, [*determined as my lot*] a roya[l] destiny while (I was) in my mother’s womb; [the goddess Mul]lissu, the great mother, called [*my name*] for ruling over the land and people; Ea and Belet-ili ar[tistically] fashioned (me) a form fit for lordship; Šin, the pure god, made a favourable sign visible regarding my exercising the kingship; [Šamaš and Adad] placed at my disposal the lore of the diviner, a craft that cannot be countermanded; [Mardu]k, the sage of the gods, granted me broad understanding and far-reaching wisdom as a gift; Nabû, the scribe of everything, bestowed on me the precepts of his craft as a present; Ninurta and Nergal endowed my body with power, virility, and unparalleled strength.” Assurbanipal’s School Days Inscription, i 9–16 (translation following Novotny 2014, 96)
- “Shazu ... perceived my inner thoughts and elevated me, me the servant who was anonymous among the people, to a high status in the country in which I was born. He called me to lordship over the country and over the people.” Autobiography of Nabopolassar, i 15–21 (translation following COS 2.121:307–8)
- “At the word of Marduk, my lord, I was raised for lordship for the country.” Rise of Nabonidus, v 8’–10’
- “[Marduk] surveyed and looked throughout all the lands, searching for a righteous king whom he would support. He called out his name: Cyrus, king of Anshan; he pronounced his name to be king over all (the world)... Marduk, the great lord, guardian (?) of his people, looked with gladness upon his good deeds and upright heart.” Cyrus Cylinder, lines 11–12 (translation following COS 2.124:314–16)
- “By the favour of Auramazda, I am king; Auramazda bestowed kingship upon me.” Bisitun Inscription of Darius, §5 (translation following Kuhrt 2007, 141)

6. Some translate this phrase, “I was a humble man,” which would have parallels with the apologetic used by others such as Nabopolassar.

Royal prerogative/affiliation. A second means of establishing the legitimacy of a candidate for the throne who was not the eldest son of the preceding king was to appeal to the will of the predecessor. Kings were known to exercise this prerogative and nominate younger sons to the throne at their discretion, as may have been the case with Hattusili I's elevation of his grandson Mursili and was certainly the case with Esarhaddon's appointment of Assurbanipal. Although we lack information regarding the precise governing principles of succession of any ancient Near Eastern society, it appears that royal imprimatur could suffice to supersede other protocols. As one would expect, younger sons employed this motif, but it is notable that on some occasions a variation of the prerogative motif, which I call royal affiliation, was used in creative ways by those who did not share the blood of their predecessor. Nabonidus, for example, places himself in the line of Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar, two earlier kings whose lineage he did not share (Rise of Nabonidus, v 14'–24'), and relates a dream in which he converses with Nebuchadnezzar about another dream in which he is elevated (vi 12'–36')—the end of the dream is unfortunately lost, but one may surmise that Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged his legitimacy. David adopts a variation of this motif also. Despite being accused of murdering most of the house of Saul, he asserts that Saul recognized his worth and called him “my son” (1 Sam 26:17, 21), and that Jonathan, Saul's presumptive heir, preferred loyalty to David over his own accession to the throne (1 Sam 20:30–33). In another tradition, David enters the royal family by marriage to Saul's daughter, Michal (1 Sam 18:20–27*), which he seems to regard as crucial to his legitimacy despite their later estrangement (see 2 Sam 3:13, 14).⁷ Darius, meanwhile, expounds on his royal ancestry even though his family seems to have been nobility in the Persian court, not kings (DB, §§1–4).

- “And Telipinu had Is[t]apariya as his first-rank wife.” Proclamation of Telipinu, ii 9–10
- “Thus Tabarna Hattusili, great king, king of Hatti, son of Mursili (II), great king, king of Hatti, grandson of Suppiluliuma, great king, king of Hatti, scion of Hattusili (I), king of Kussar.... My father Mursili begot us four children—Halpasulupi, Muwatalli, Hattusili, and Massanauzzi, a daughter.” Autobiography of Hattusili, i 1–4, 9–11
- “Then Saul said to David, ‘Blessed are you, my son David! You will surely act, and you will surely achieve.’” Traditions of David's Rise and Reign, 1 Sam 26:25
- “King David said, ‘... And go up after [Solomon], and he will come and he will sit upon my throne.’” Succession Narrative of Solomon, 1 Kgs 1:35

7. It is possible that 2 Sam 3:13 belongs to a separate literary horizon that is not aware of an estrangement between the two; see my brief comment in §5.2.2 p. 209.

- “And my father lay down, going to [his fathers.]” Tel Dan Inscription of Hazael, line 3
- “... (my) father, my progenitor, truly elevated me in the assembly of my brothers. ‘Is this son my successor?’ he asked Shamash and Adad by divination, and they answered him (with) a true yes, saying, ‘He is your replacement...’” Accession of Esarhaddon, i 10–12
- “The father who engendered me beheld the heroism that the great gods had determined for me. At the command of the great gods, he greatly preferred me over the assembly of my elder brothers.” Assurbanipal’s School Days Inscription, i 34–35 (translation following Novotny 2014, 97)
- “Of Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar, kings who came before me, their legitimate representative am I.” Rise of Nabonidus, v 14’–18’
- “My father is Vishtaspa; Vishtaspa’s father is Arshama; Arshama’s father is Ariaramna; Ariaramna’s father is Cishpish; Cishpish’s father is Hakhaimanish.... From long ago we are noble; from long ago we are royal.... Eight of our family were kings before; I am the ninth; nine kings are we in succession ... the kingship had belonged a long time to our family.” Bisitun Inscription of Darius, §§1, 4, 12 (translation following Kuhrt 2007, 141, 143)

Popular acclamation. Though not as significant as the prior two grounds for establishing legitimacy, the idea of popular acclamation occurs frequently in the apologies. The *vox populi* may not have been the *vox dei* in the ancient Near East, but it was worth something.

- “But as for me—the Kaskaeans who had been (my) enemies, they supported me, and all Hattusa supported me.” Autobiography of Hattusili, iv 26–29
- “Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron, and they said, ‘See, we are your bone and your flesh. For some time while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel out and brought it in. Yahweh said to you, “You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will be a ruler over Israel.”’ Then all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron and they anointed David king over Israel.” Traditions of David’s Rise and Reign, 2 Sam 5:1–3
- “And all the people said, ‘(Long) live King Solomon!’ And all the people went up after him and were playing pipes and rejoicing mightily. And the earth shook with their sound.” Succession Narrative of Solomon, 1 Kgs 1:39–40
- “The people of Assyria, who had sworn concerning me a treaty, an oath of the great gods, came before me and kissed my feet.” Accession of Esarhaddon, i 80–81

- “Upon my entry into the palace, the entire camp rejoiced, it was filled with music. Nobles and eunuchs were happy ...” Assurbanipal’s School Days Inscription, ii 7’–8’ (translation following Novotny 2014, 97)
- “[...] into the palace they brought me, and they all prostrated themselves at my feet. They kissed my feet, constantly blessing my kingship.” Rise of Nabonidus, v 1’–7’
- “When I entered Babylon in a peaceful manner, I took up my lordly reign in the royal palace amidst rejoicing and happiness. Marduk, the great lord, caused the magnanimous people of Babylon [to ...] me ...” Cyrus Cylinder, lines 22–23

Military success. A king’s ability to lead (or in some cases, send) his troops to victory in battle was considered a confirmation of his divine approbation; likewise defeat signaled divine disapprobation. Thus military success functions as something of an extension of the motif of divine election. This theme pervaded the royal ideology of all societies of the ancient Near East and has little correlation with apologetic—in fact, military successes often do not appear in apologies since apologies often accompanied troublesome successions during which the kingdom was not stable enough to launch campaigns. In certain circumstances, however, this motif does function in apologetic, particularly in situations where the king proved his worth through suppressing rebellions or demonstrating other military prowess in the course of securing his throne. The best example of this comes in Darius’s inscription from Bisitun, in which he boasts of quelling a long series of revolts that broke out during his coup.

- “I drove away the Kaskeans and b[y] my own ability I put it in order... To the Hatti lands I added many territories.” Autobiography of Hattusili, iii 11–12, iv 57–58
- “Then it was when they came, when David returned from slaying the Philistines, that women came forth from all the towns of Israel with singing and dancing, to meet King Saul with tambourines, and with joy(ful songs), and with instruments. And the women sang while making merry, ‘Saul has slain his thousands, and David his myriads.’” Traditions of David’s Rise and Reign, 1 Sam 18:6–7
- “By the command of the great gods, my lords, I subdued (the rebellious towns).” Autobiography of Šamši-Adad V i 52–53 (translation following RIMA 3:183 Šamši-Adad V A.O.103.1)
- “And Hadad went before me, [and] I went out from the sev[en citi]es of my kingdom, and I killed [seve]nty ki[ngs], harnessers of [thousands of char]iots and thousands of riders.” Tel Dan Inscription of Hazael, lines 5–7
- “... I, the weak one, the powerless one, who constantly seeks the lord of lords, with the mighty strength of Nabû and Marduk my lords I removed

them from Akkad and caused (the Babylonians) to throw off their yoke.” Autobiography of Nabopolassar, i 32–ii 5 (translation following COS 2.121:307–8)

- “My vast army moved about Babylon in peace; I did not permit anyone to frighten (the people of) [Sumer] and Akkad.” Cyrus Cylinder, line 24 (translation following COS 2.124:314–16)
- “This (is) what I have done, by the favour of Auramazda, in one and the same year, after I became king. I have fought nineteen battles. By the favour of Auramazda, I defeated them and took nine kings prisoner.... These (are) the countries which became rebellious. The Lie made them rebellious, because these (men) lied to the people. After that Auramazda gave them into my hand; as was my desire, so I did unto them.... This that I have done, by the favour of Auramazda, in one and the same year I did.” Bisitun Inscription of Darius, §§52, 54, 56 (translation following Kuhrt 2007, 148)

The unworthy predecessor. This motif finds expression in the besmirching of the previous king, usually by demonstrating how he forfeited divine favor through impious acts. The unworthy predecessor often instigates conflict with the subject of the apology, thereby legitimating the ensuing usurpation. The perfidious king is then contrasted with the protagonist, who corrects the wrongs perpetrated in the previous regime. This motif generally appears in apologies where the ruler usurped power from an unrelated predecessor and sought to establish a new dynasty (see Dick 2004, 12–13). The two examples that epitomize the motif of the unworthy predecessor appear in the two most famous apologies, the Autobiography of Hattusili III and the Traditions of David’s Rise and Reign. In the former, Hattusili’s nephew Urhi-Tessup repeatedly provokes Hattusili by stripping him of his offices due to jealousy at his prosperity. Eventually Urhi-Tessup crosses the line, forcing Hattusili to oust him. In the latter, Yahweh departs from Saul and favors the upstart David, eliciting jealousy, rage, and fear from the incumbent. This precipitates a downward spiral, including his making several attempts on the loyal David’s life and slaughtering a group of Yahweh’s priests. Eventually Saul dies in combat. Along with divine election, the unworthy predecessor (along with the following related motif) is the most pervasive motif that occurs in ancient Near Eastern apologies, and it is of the utmost ideological urgency.

- “When Huzziya (wanted) to kill them ...” Proclamation of Telipinu, ii 11
- “But when Urhi-Tessup noted the goodness [of the goddess] for me, he envied me [and] he har[med] me. He took away all of my administrators from me, and the cit[y Samuha] also he took away from me, and the empty lands that I had resettled, al[l] those he also took away from me. And he diminished me—but at the word of the goddess, he did not take away Hakpis from me—[because] I was *sanga*-priest to Tessup of the city

Nerik, he therefore did not take it away from me (either).... But that one schemed my destruction by word of god and by word of human, and he took away Hakpis and Nerik from me.” Autobiography of Hattusili III, iii 54’–61’, 63’–64’

- “The Assyrian, who had ruled Akkad because of divine anger and had, with his heavy yoke, oppressed the inhabitants of the country ...” Autobiography of Nabopolassar, i 28–31 (translation following COS 2.121:307–8)
- “Lā-abāši-Mar[duk], [Neriglissar’s] young son, who did not grasp proper conduct, sat upon the throne of kingship against the will of the gods ...” Rise of Nabonidus, iv 37’–42’
- “An incompetent person was installed to exercise lordship over his country.... [Marduk] delivered Nabonidus, the king who did not revere him, into his hands.” Cyrus Cylinder, lines 3, 17 (translation following COS 2.124:314–16)
- “Then there was a man, a magus, Gaumata by name ... He lied thus to the people: ‘I am Bardiya, son of Cyrus, brother of Cambyses.’ ... He seized the kingship.... The people were very much afraid of him, (thinking that) he would kill many people who had known Bardiya previously.” Bisitun Inscription of Darius §§11, 13 (translation following Kuhrt 2007, 143)⁸

The unworthy rival(s). This is distinct from the previous motif in that it involves not the previous king, but rivals for the recently (or soon-to-be, in Solomon’s case) vacated throne.⁹ This appears not in cases of blatant usurpation, but in situations of unstable transitions of power.

- “Adonijah, son of Haggith, was exalting himself, saying, ‘I will rule.’ ... And his father had not chastened him during his days, saying, ‘Why have you acted thus?’” Succession Narrative of Solomon, 1 Kgs 1:5–6¹⁰
- “When Aššur-da”in-apla, at the time of Shalmaneser (III), his father, acted treacherously by inciting insurrection, uprising, and criminal acts, caused the land to rebel and prepared for battle ...” Autobiography of Šamši-Adad V i 39–42 (translation following RIMA 3:183 Šamši-Adad V A.0.103.1)

8. The Bisitun Inscription provides a debatable example of this motif. In light of the controversy surrounding what actually happened during 522 BCE and the rapidity of turnover of the throne from Cambyses to Gaumata to Darius, one could feasibly classify this as an instance of the unworthy rival.

9. Note that Ishida expands Hoffner’s category of unworthy predecessor to “The unworthiness of the predecessor(s) and/or rival prince(s)” (1987, 169) in his article focusing on Adonijah.

10. Note, however, that I read these verses more generously toward Adonijah than many others do. See my discussion in §6.3.

- “Proper conduct departed my brothers and they abandoned the will of the gods. In their own overweening deeds they trusted and they schemed evil. Calumny, slander, and defamation—according to what is not in the will of the gods—they spread about me. Unwholesome lies they constantly spoke behind my back, (and) hatred.” Accession of Esarhaddon, i 23–28

Passivity. This refers to the motif, common in the apologies of usurpers, that the new king did not intend to seize the throne but became swept up in events and things just turned out that way. The kings tend to portray themselves as victims of circumstance or pawns in a game much greater than themselves, manipulated by god(s) and humans into redressing the injustices of the land. The motif appears often to counter allegations that the new king grasped for power and his lust for power caused him to forsake morality during his ascent. The concept of the king’s passivity turns this charge on its head by depicting the king as reluctantly accepting the onus of rule, not from ambition but from the recognition that he is best equipped to lead the kingdom. The rhetoric of passivity is frequently only implicit in a text, with rulers simply attributing their rise to the work of others—often the gods, making this a companion to divine election. To cite just one example, Nabopolassar, founder of the Neo-Babylonian dynasty, portrays himself as only a pious servant of the gods while “[Shazu] caused Nergal, the strongest among the gods, to march at my side; he slew my foes, felled my enemies.”¹¹ Similarly Ishtar and Yahweh are the active forces in the respective apologies of Hattusili and David; each rises inexorably to the throne despite refusing (in Hattusili’s case, for seven years) to precipitate his rival’s downfall. The passivity motif is difficult to demonstrate with brief examples because it manifests more in what the text does not say than what the text does say. For example, the Succession Narrative of Solomon unquestionably incorporates this motif, but only through the fact that Solomon himself does nothing during his rise. He is consistently the object acted upon by outside forces. The motif does occasionally become explicit, however, such as in the following example:

- “... (though) the kingship never [enter]ed my mind ...” Rise of Nabonidus, vii 47’–48’

Transcendent nonretaliation. This, which often goes hand in hand with the passivity motif, refers to when the king states that he was provoked by his enemy yet still refused to take action against him. This is similar to the following motif of the merciful victor, but I elect to keep them separate because they serve slightly different rhetorical functions. The apologist uses the motif of transcendent non-

11. i 24–27; translation following COS 2.124:314–16.

retaliation to demonstrate that the protagonist respected the office of kingship so much that he would rather suffer injury than avenge himself, demonstrating his piety and reinforcing his lack of desire for the throne. The merciful victor pertains to the king's merciful character more broadly.

- “So out [o]f respect for my brother I did not retaliate accordingly, [a]nd for seven years I was tolerant.” Autobiography of Hattusili, iii 61'–62'
- “David said, ‘As Yahweh lives, it may be that Yahweh will strike [Saul], or his day will come and he will die, or he will fall in battle and be swept away. Yahweh forbid that I should stretch out my hand against Yahweh's anointed!’” Traditions of David's Rise and Reign, 1 Sam 26:10–11

The merciful victor. This refers to the king who has just come to power and intends to display his beneficence by pardoning his enemies. Such gestures may often have been motivated more by *Realpolitik* than by magnanimity, but drawing attention to them highlighted the king's merciful nature and was meant to garner popular support.¹²

- “[Huzziya] (had) five br[ot]hers, and [Telipinu] constructed houses for them, saying, ‘Let them go! Let them live! And let them feast (and) drink! You shall not do a[ny] evil to them. And I proclaim, “Those did evil to me, but I [will not do evil] to them.”’” Proclamation of Telipinu, ii 13–15
- “Will any man be killed in Israel today? For do I [David] not know that today I am king over Israel?” Traditions of David's Rise and Reign, 2 Sam 19:23[22]
- “If [Adonijah] show himself worthy (lit. ‘If he should be a son of valor’), none of his hairs will fall to the ground. But if evil is found in him, he will die.” Succession Narrative of Solomon, 1 Kgs 1:52

The youngest brother? I hesitate to include this final motif here for a few reasons. It may be an historical coincidence that a disproportionate number of apologies draw attention to this, and in the case of Esarhaddon Assyriologists debate whether he calls himself the superlative “youngest” brother or only a “younger” brother.¹³ The best-known instance of this is David, yet the mention of his status as

12. Interestingly, of the kings who issued apologies, several emphasized their lenience toward rivals after prevailing in the succession turmoil (Telipinu, Hattusili, David, Solomon), but those who did not opted for the opposite extreme, emphasizing their ruthlessness with their opponents (Esarhaddon, Darius). This idea that kings wanted to be perceived as merciful or harsh, but not somewhere in the middle, is illustrated by the story of Rehoboam's seeking advice on how to treat his Israelite subjects in 1 Kgs 12:1–11. The author of that text, at least, recommended opting for mercy.

13. In another interesting legitimization, Xerxes points out that he was a younger son of

youngest brother occurs in a later accretion (1 Sam 16:1–13) that does not seem to have been part of the original apology.¹⁴ It could be, though, that there circulated in the ancient Near East a tradition of the elevation of the youngest brother that lent itself well to certain unexpected kings.¹⁵

- “My father Mursili begot us four children—Halpasulupi, Muwatalli, Hattusili, and Massanauzzi, a daughter. Of all these I was the youngest child ...” Autobiography of Hattusili, i 9–11
- “Of my oldest brothers, their youngest brother am I.” Accession of Esarhaddon, i 8

2.2 IDENTIFYING ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN ROYAL APOLOGIES

Having surveyed the rhetoric common in ancient Near Eastern royal apologetic, we are in a position to identify and discuss several texts that merit the label “apology.” It should first be reiterated that the diversity of the origins of ancient Near Eastern apologies precludes any literary feature from serving as a diagnostic marker of apologetic. The above-mentioned motifs do not constitute any sort of checklist; not every motif occurs in every apology since the circumstances of individual kings differed. Furthermore, these are not exclusively apologetic motifs, but only motifs that tend to occur within apologies. Kings did not invent new royal imagery for the purposes of self-defense, but drew from an extant ideological repertoire to portray themselves in particular ways. Nevertheless, constellations of certain motifs often indicate an apologetic mode.

One further important aspect of apologetic remains to be discussed, namely, that apologetic is embedded. Because no literary genre of apologetic existed in the ancient Near East, apologies were necessarily woven into texts of extant literary genres.¹⁶ This often manifests in a tension between the literary-genre-specific

Darius (XPf §§3–4; for more on this inscription see below, §2.2.1). Xerxes does not claim to be the youngest brother, however, and Herodotus informs us that Xerxes was not the youngest, but the eldest son of Darius’s second wife and the first son born to Darius after he became king (Herodotus 7.2.2–3). It could be that the motif simply demands a younger brother, not the youngest brother.

14. Of course, if this element belongs to a later tradition, it would reinforce the point that the “youngest brother” was a motif applied to famous figures in the ancient Near East.

15. One may note here the Joseph story, though the motif of the youngest is somewhat problematized by the final son, Benjamin.

16. The Accession of Esarhaddon provides a unique exception to this; the apology appears to have been composed independently and inserted in its entirety into the royal annals. But although Esarhaddon’s apology is not interwoven into another text, it remains embedded within another text. See §8.2.

stated purpose of a text (dedication, commemoration, etc.) and the apologetic purpose of the same text (justification and legitimation). One can see this most clearly with the Autobiography of Hattusili III, a dedicatory inscription that simultaneously endows a particular cult with certain resources and legitimates Hattusili's usurpation of the Hittite throne (see §4.4). Acknowledging this duality of purpose has some ramifications. First, it allows for a more nuanced understanding of certain apologies. Scholars have often felt compelled to ignore either the one intent or the other of ancient Near Eastern apologies, but this is not called for. Often a text's apologetic function dovetails with the chosen literary genre in ways that, when understood correctly, can help one understand its nature. For example, see my sections on the *Sitz im Leben* of the apologies of Telipinu (§3.4), Hazael (§7.4), and Nabonidus (§9.4). Secondly, recognizing the embeddedness of apologies allows one to deal with biblical material, especially that pertaining to David. As I discuss in §5.2, the stories of David in 1–2 Samuel do not represent a specific "text" contemporary with David, but a series of diverse traditions. In light of the fact that apologies appear within other literary genres, the lack of an extant, discrete Davidic apology need not concern us overmuch.

When compiling the following list of ancient Near Eastern apologies, I cast the net widely. The apologies in question stem geographically from Anatolia, Mesopotamia, and the Levant, and chronologically from about the sixteenth century to the fifth century BCE. This includes several civilizations: Hatti (in both Old Kingdom and Empire periods), Aram, Israel, Assyria, Babylonia, and Persia. This distribution has the advantage of making the study cross-cultural while remaining focused within the broad confines of the ancient Near East, which shared at least some ideological roots.¹⁷ I make no attempt in this study to follow the phenomenon of royal apologetic into the Hellenistic world, both because it presents a major cultural and ideological shift from the societies studied here and for the pragmatic reason that I am not a trained classicist.¹⁸

The following list is not intended to be definitive. Labeling texts on the basis of exigence is a subjective enterprise, but it is the only possibility for classifying

17. I do not include any Egyptian material in my study. Although Egyptian royal ideology differed markedly from that seen in the rest of the contemporary Near East, I suspect an investigation of this material from an apologetic perspective would be a fruitful enterprise. One particular text that deserves inquiry in this regard is the coronation text of Horemheb, a near contemporary of Hattusili III of Hatti. Fortunately, my colleague Karen Bryson at the Johns Hopkins University is preparing a new study of Horemheb's reign, which will include a close analysis of his coronation text.

18. This also has the unintended benefit of avoiding some confusion. Apologetic (though not "royal" apologetic) in the classical world is most often discussed in reference to the *apologias* given in legal settings as personal defenses against criminal charges. Indeed, one could argue that in Greece, if nowhere else, the *apologia* may have constituted a literary genre since these speeches tended to subscribe to formal and structural conventions.

according to rhetorical genre or mode. With that significant caveat, one can find examples of what I consider ancient Near Eastern royal apologetic in the following sixteen texts:

- (1) The Proclamation of Telipinu (ruled ca. 1525–1500 BCE; Hittite; translation in §3.2.2)
- (2) The Autobiography of Hattusili III (ruled ca. 1267–1240 BCE; Hittite; translation in §4.2.2)
- (3) The Traditions of David's Rise and Reign (began reign ca. 1010 BCE; Judahite/Israelite; for discussion of source text see §5.2)
- (4) The Succession Narrative of Solomon (began reign ca. 970 BCE; Israelite; 1 Kgs 1–2*, for discussion of source text see §6.2)
- (5) The Tel Dan Inscription of Hazael (began reign ca. 843 BCE; Aramean; translation in §7.2.2)
- (6) The Revolt of Jehu (ruled ca. 842–815 BCE; Israelite/Samaritan; 2 Kgs 9:1–10:28 and elsewhere in the Elijah-Elisha cycle¹⁹)
- (7) The Enthronement of Joash (ruled ca. 836–800 BCE; Judahite; 2 Kgs 11)
- (8) The Autobiography of Šamši-Adad V (ruled 823–811 BCE; Assyrian; translation in RIMA 3:180–88 Šamši-Adad V A.0.103.1, see esp. i 39–53a)
- (9) The Zakkur Inscription (ruled early eighth century BCE; Syrian; translation in COS 2.35:155; *HST* 125)
- (10) The Accession of Esarhaddon (ruled 680–669 BCE; Assyrian; translation in §8.2.2)
- (11) The Autobiography of Assurbanipal (ruled 668–ca. 631 BCE; Assyrian; translation in Novotny 2014, 96–98; *HST* 138²⁰)
- (12) The Autobiography of Nabopolassar (ruled 625–605 BCE; Babylonian; translation in COS 2.121:307–8; *HST* 143, see esp. i 7–ii 5)

19. On the composition of the Elijah-Elisha cycle to legitimate Jehu, see the work of, among others, Marsha White, e.g., White 1994.

20. As I note below, Assurbanipal's Autobiography exists in two major editions with significant differences. Novotny (2014, 96–98) translates the first edition, the "School Days Inscription," L4; *HST* on the other hand provides only the second edition, from the prism known as Prism A or the Rassam Prism (or Cylinder A or the Rassam Cylinder, though the object is a prism, not a cylinder). For more on these editions, see my discussion of the text below. Unfortunately, Assurbanipal's inscriptions have not been translated into English much recently, and no comprehensive edition of his inscriptions exists in any language. Borger provides the introductions to the various recensions of the royal annals *seriatim* (1996, 204–10), but the best-preserved copy of the first edition of the autobiography appears not in the annals, but as the introduction to (the draft copy of) a display inscription (L4). For this, see Streck 1916, 252–71.

- (13) The Rise of Nabonidus (ruled 555–539 BCE; Babylonian; translation in §9.2.2)
- (14) The Cyrus Cylinder (ruled ca. 559–531 BCE; Persian; translation in COS 2.124:314–16; *HST* 157)
- (15) The Bisitun Inscription of Darius (ruled 522–486 BCE; Persian; translation in Kuhrt 2007, 140–57)
- (16) The Elevation of Xerxes (ruled 485–465 BCE; Persian; translation in Kuhrt 2007, 244)

Viewing these texts in concert should illustrate several of the points previously made. First, royal apologetic appears in texts of a variety of literary genres. The above list includes dedicatory inscriptions, display inscriptions, annals, and more. Unfortunately, we can only speculate on how the biblical material circulated before being gathered into the account of Israel's history. Second, we sometimes have direct access to a ruler's apology, at other times only indirect. For example, most scholars presume that Hattusili's Autobiography was composed primarily for the purpose of justifying his action against his nephew and legitimating his place on the throne. On the other hand, I am not aware of any scholar who thinks that the Tel Dan Inscription was composed in order to legitimate Hazael's rise over Damascus; in the latter text we see only the reflexes of apologetic rhetoric. Third, the apologies are all embedded in preexisting literary forms, but they are embedded in different ways. For example, focus on the legitimacy of Hattusili and Darius suffuses the entirety of both of these long, autobiographical texts; one cannot extricate the apology from the rest of the inscription. The Assyrian and Babylonian autobiographies, however, tend to be discrete units that appear to have been composed separately and inserted in otherwise-typical annals (one can see this with the apologies of Šamši-Adad V, Esarhaddon, and Assurbanipal, and in a slightly different way with Nabopolassar and Nabonidus). Fourth, some apologies focus more on legitimating the new ruler's position on the throne, while others seem unconcerned with legitimacy and serve solely to justify certain actions taken while securing the throne. Most of the royal apologies serve both these ends. (See fig. 1 in §1.4.5.) Finally, viewing these together shows both the unity and the diversity among ancient Near Eastern apologies. Nearly all the inscriptions emphasize the ruler's divine election and the unworthiness of their predecessor or rival, but they do so in unique, often creative ways. Exploring these dissimilar means of addressing similar issues is one of the great rewards of a study such as this.

2.2.1 Apologies Not Covered in Depth in This Volume

In the following seven chapters I will examine closely seven of the sixteen apologies mentioned above. Before I turn to them, however, here are some further remarks on the remaining nine. I have not included these texts for two reasons: first, for the practical reason that I have tried to maintain a manageable amount of

material, the close study of every ancient Near Eastern apology would be prohibitive in this regard. Second, several of these texts offer little evidence to establish the exact charges leveled against the ruler in question, which is something I focus on in the following studies. That is, many of these texts consist almost exclusively of royal legitimations, with no detectable interest in the justification of particular acts.

The Revolt of Jehu. Although the David narratives have received far more attention than the rest of the biblical texts combined with regard to apologetic nature, some other texts appear to have been conceived with legitimizing and justificatory ends. For example, the Hebrew Bible tells of the usurpation of Jehu, who seized the throne of Samaria by assassinating his predecessor, Joram, and slaughtering the rest of his kin, the descendants of Ahab. Instead of censuring this massacre, however, the biblical narrative justifies it. Divine election features prominently; Jehu took the throne on the orders of Yahweh (mediated through the prophet Elisha) and instituted a major religious reform by eliminating all the priests of Baal. As with the other biblical apologies, it is difficult to establish the precise boundaries of the source material. The climax of the narrative occurs in 2 Kgs 9–10, but parts of the preceding prophetic cycle are likely connected, such as Yahweh’s oracle to Elijah to anoint Jehu in 1 Kgs 19:15–18 (which was not fulfilled precisely as planned) and the story of Naboth’s vineyard in 1 Kgs 21, which furnishes a fascinating specimen of the unworthy predecessor motif by condemning Ahab’s entire line. Whatever its exact origin, this text was undoubtedly composed at least in part as a royal justification, and perhaps as a response to Jehu’s detractors,²¹ and consequently would be a valuable addition to this study.²²

The Enthronement of Joash. Following the account of Jehu is the story of Joash, saved as an infant from Queen Athaliah’s attempts to eradicate the royal family and

21. That a faction in Samaria opposed Jehu is evident in the prophecy of Hosea: “And Yahweh said to [Hosea], ‘Call his name Jezreel, for in a little while I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu and I will cause the kingdom of the house of Israel to cease’” (Hos 1:4). Halpern expresses it thus: “Jehu represents Israel’s collapse under Damascene pressure. His apology, taken up whole in Kings, asserts that he was a religious reformer, filled with zeal for Yahweh and disgust at the Phoenician connections, display, and acropolis temple of the House of Omri. But this is an old story: reform, said Roscoe Conklin[g], is the final refuge of a scoundrel. Opponents of Jehu’s dynasty, such as Hosea, saw his patriotism and reform as mere window-dressing for the bloody massacre that left the royal family dismembered, and the heads of 70 Omride princes mounded up in a pile outside Samaria’s gate” (2001, 471). Barré also writes, “That this breach of loyalty was regarded negatively is shown by the fact that Jehu himself later attempted to justify it before the people of Jezreel” (1988, 97).

22. White also takes for granted that the Jehu narrative is apologetic and further argues that the entire Elijah cycle was created by Jehu’s scribes for the purpose of legitimating the king, thus “most of the Elijah legends are entirely subordinated to Jehuite apologetic concerns” (1997, 77). Unfortunately for this study, White focuses on the history behind Jehu’s coup and does not elaborate on the literary aspects of the Jehu narrative.

installed on the throne six years later by Jehoiada the priest. His enthronement necessitated the removal of Athaliah (the unworthy predecessor), who was dragged outside the temple and killed. The propagandistic nature of this chapter has been noted by many (see esp. Liverani 1974; 2004, 147–59); it appears to function as a legitimization of Joash and a justification for Jehoiada, who engineered the coup (including the assassination of Athaliah) and doubtless served as regent during Joash's minority.²³

The Autobiography of Šamši-Adad V. Tadmor treats this text in his work on apologetic (1983, 53–54), and with only a brief autobiographical section and pertinent external materials to inform us of the history of the period, there is little to add to his treatment. Like the Accession of Esarhaddon (see ch. 8) and the Autobiography of Assurbanipal (below), this text appears within the Assyrian royal annals. It describes the turbulent circumstances that accompanied Šamši-Adad's succession. Šamši-Adad took control of Assyria only after a six-year civil war between him and his (presumably older, see Tadmor 1983, 53) brother, Aššur-da'in-apli, at the end of the reign of Shalmaneser III. To the surprise of no one, the text portrays Aššur-da'in-apli—the unworthy rival—as having incited rebellions throughout the land, which Šamši-Adad quelled to restore order. Few sources outside of Šamši-Adad's propagandistic account shed light on this civil war, however, and thus we lack the ability to contextualize the legitimization.

The Zakkur Inscription. The literary genre of this inscription is difficult to pin down; it contains elements of dedicatory, victory, and building inscriptions. It contains a brief legitimization in the opening lines, noting the divine election of Zakkur to the kingship of Ḫ azrak by the deity Ba'l-šamayn in language suggestive of a usurpation. The text's fragmentary nature and the lack of supplementary historical materials prevent us from drawing further conclusions, however, and its status as an apology is inconclusive.²⁴

The Autobiography of Assurbanipal. Like the Autobiography of Šamši-Adad V above, this text, or more appropriately these texts, were treated by Tadmor (1983,

23. Barré asserts that the entire complex of 2 Kgs 9–11 is a damnation of Jehu and legitimization of Joash; he suggests that the elements that have led most scholars to see a pro-Jehu orientation in 2 Kgs 9–10 are later interpolations (1988, 44–46). On the basis of the text's apologetic intention, he considers the *Sitz im Leben* of this text to be found among influential citizens in Joash's kingdom (1988, 52–54). This understanding of the text, although not immediately convincing, is feasible and deserves further inquiry. Moreover, I should note in praise of Barré that unlike many of his contemporaries, he never considers apologetic a literary genre; he labels the literary genre of 2 Kgs 9–11 political novella.

24. This can be contrasted with the Tel Dan Inscription, another fragmentary inscription with several motifs suggestive of apologetic. But while several external sources attest to the accusations launched against Hazael (see §7.1), little external evidence informs us about Zakkur's situation. The Zakkur Inscription appears to be apologetic, but lacking both the entire text and supplementary sources, we cannot be certain.

47–52). The study of Assurbanipal's legitimization(s)—no hint of justification appears here, which is consistent with our understanding of Assurbanipal's reign; several extant texts show irrefutably that Esarhaddon nominated him as his heir—is complicated by the fact that it exists in two major editions, each with various subeditions. The first²⁵ was apparently published early in his reign (668 BCE) and contains an account of Esarhaddon's elevation of Assurbanipal based on the latter's many virtues, notably his wisdom. This version of the legitimization appeared in the earliest of the known recensions of Assurbanipal's royal annals (ca. 665 BCE; cf. Cogan and Tadmor 1977, 81–82; Novotny 2003b, 214), but was significantly truncated in the introductions to the following recensions (such as Prisms B and D, 649–648 BCE). The extensive autobiography was revived in later recensions of the annals (Prisms F and A, ca. 645 and 644–642 BCE respectively), but with the modification that Assurbanipal's election was predestined by the gods rather than a result of his abilities (Weissert and Onasch 1992, 76–77).

In sum, then, Assurbanipal commissioned a royal legitimization that circulated in at least the first half-decade of his reign, then lay dormant for a long period (according to the preserved inscriptional evidence) only to be reemphasized in slightly modified fashion two decades later. The emphasis on legitimization occurs in one nonannalistic early inscription and the earliest recension and some of the later recensions of the royal annals, but not in the intermediary recensions of the annals, which contain the second, shorter edition. It could be that the lengthy self-justification in the early texts functioned simply to pad the inscriptions, which would otherwise have been rather short since Assurbanipal had not yet had time to accomplish much during his reign. The difference in the theme of self-justification among the various recensions of the annals could also be a product of the buildings for which they were composed.²⁶

This text does not appear to have been commissioned as a response to accusations, but as a legitimization reflecting on Assurbanipal's nomination to the throne of Assyria over his elder brother Šamaš-šuma-ukin. Assurbanipal's Autobiography, like the Accession of Esarhaddon, is not an independent text but serves as an introduction to various inscriptions, particularly the royal annals.

The Autobiography of Nabopolassar. Nabopolassar's autobiography resembles Assurbanipal's in many respects; it too contains many legitimizing elements without any semblance of justification. The founder of the Neo-Babylonian dynasty and overthrewer of Assyria, Nabopolassar stresses his election by Nabû and Mar-

25. The earlier edition of the autobiography, known as "Assurbanipal's School Days Inscription," appears as the introduction to the display inscription L4 (for the text, see Novotny 2014, xvi–xvii, 42–44, 77–80, 96–99). A similar version was incorporated into the royal annals in Prism E (cf. Weissert and Onasch 1992), but this text is very fragmentary.

26. I would like to thank Jamie Novotny for sharing with me his work (both published and unpublished) and bibliography on Assurbanipal as I examined this text.

duk. The text adopts a variation of the unworthy predecessor motif, substituting “the Assyrian” for an individual. Despite the stress on divine election and the unworthy predecessor, Nabopolassar departs from the common rhetoric of legitimation in that he avoids the ideas of royal prerogative or royal affiliation; he refers to himself as “the servant who was anonymous among the people” (COS 2.121:307) prior to his elevation. This text was mentioned in passing by Tadmor (1983, 56).

The Cyrus Cylinder. The elaborate self-justification in this text provides one of the most illustrative examples of royal legitimation from the ancient Near East, but there is no apparent justification. It seems that Cyrus took power in Babylon with widespread approbation and did not commission this text out of compulsion to defend himself against detractors.²⁷ (Alternatively, the apology was so effective, and is so well concealed in the text, that it can no longer be detected.) Cyrus establishes his legitimacy through divine election and popular acclamation, and he also includes one of the finest examples of the unworthy predecessor motif in his condemnation of Nabonidus.²⁸

The Bisitun Inscription of Darius. The best example of royal apologetic not included in this study, in this text Darius describes the coup that placed him on the throne of Persia. Darius defends his (dubious) legitimacy in a variety of ways, and the inscription was doubtless commissioned in part to counter allegations of misconduct by providing an official version of events.²⁹ Darius uses several of the motifs discussed in §2.1 above: divine election appears via the nearly hypnotic repetition of “by the grace of Auramazda”; he employs royal affiliation by appealing to a long line of ancestral kings, despite apparently not being part of the prior royal family; the bulk of the inscription describes his suppression of numerous revolts, offering a nonpareil example of the military conquest motif; and his creative use of the unworthy predecessor/rival motif—which includes the secret death of his predecessor and a magus who impersonated the late prince in order to usurp the Persian throne—is so superficially absurd that one cannot help but wonder if there is some truth to it.

27. Such at least is the common interpretation of events. Note, though, this characterization emerges almost entirely from Persian propaganda and should therefore be viewed critically (for an example of this more nuanced view, see Briant 2002, 40–41; Briant describes the triumphal entry depicted by Cyrus as “unlikely”).

28. As an explanation of irregular succession, the Cyrus Cylinder provides one of the best examples of apology according to the definition used by Hoffner and Tadmor (see §1.4.4). The Cyrus Cylinder has been mentioned briefly in other treatments of apologetic for this reason (Dick 2004, 5–6, 10), though it has received surprisingly little attention overall in this vein given how well it illustrates royal legitimation.

29. Tadmor states that the genre (*sic!*) of apology “was continued by the Persian conquerors of Babylon and found its most masterful expression in the apology of Darius I” (1983, 56). I maintain that Hattusili’s Autobiography continues to be the paradigmatic example of royal apology but nevertheless understand Tadmor’s sentiment here.

The Elevation of Xerxes. In this short text Xerxes recounts how he was nominated for kingship despite having elder brothers: “Darius had other sons also; (but) thus was the desire of Auramazda: Darius, my father, made me the greatest after himself” (§4; translation following Kuhrt 2007, 244). In this statement he concisely employs the motifs of divine election and royal prerogative. I would classify this as primarily a legitimizing text, though Herodotus records that a dispute broke out between Darius’s sons regarding who took precedence (7.2.2–3; Kuhrt provides a translation in 2007, 245). The text is also briefly discussed by Tadmor (1983, 57).

2.2.2 Other Texts That Have Been Interpreted as Apologies in Earlier Literature

I discuss here two more texts, both of which have previously been identified as apologies, but in neither case do I detect any response to allegations of misconduct or illegitimacy. Both of these are autobiographical memorial inscriptions. Although at least one and maybe both were commissioned by kings who assumed power irregularly, I do not consider either an apology. I mention them here only to justify my omission of them from this study.

The Autobiography of Idrimi (ruled ca. fifteenth century BCE;³⁰ Syrian [ruled in Alalah]; translation in COS 1.148:479–80; *HST* 89). This text has the literary genre of memorial inscription;³¹ it seems to have been composed at the end of Idrimi’s reign, perhaps even on the occasion of his death. I include it in this list because Tadmor labeled it an apology (1973, 37, 54; see also Liverani 2004, 85–96, 139–40, 148–52). The text may have some legitimizing elements, but it does not seem to be motivated by the exigence of response. It does fit Tadmor’s description of royal apologies as “literary compositions by kings who assumed their office in an irregular fashion” (1983, 36), but not the definition employed in this study.

The Kilamuwa Inscription (ruled late ninth century BCE; Phoenician; translation in COS 2.30:147–48). Ishida (1985) identified this memorial inscription as an

30. Scholars have long been at pains to explain the gap between the reign of the historical Idrimi in the fifteenth century and the find spot of his statue in a stratum dating to ca. 1200 BCE. In a recent reanalysis of Woolley’s work at Alalah, however, Fink argues that Woolley erred regarding the find spot of this object and that it appears connected to Level IIIW(oolley)/IVBF(ink), which dates to the invasion of Suppiluliuma I in the mid-fourteenth century (Fink 2010, 27–60, 93–99). This strengthens the idea that the inscription is an authentic autobiography rather than a pseudo-autobiography (see the following footnote).

31. See Van Seters 1983, 191–92. In an interesting treatment of this inscription, Liverani interprets it as a fairy tale in an attempt to highlight the text’s literary quality, but he does not deny the historicity of the text (2004, 94–96). I am not persuaded by the arguments of Longman and others that the text is a pseudo-autobiography (cf. Longman 1991, 62–66).

apology in an article comparing it to the Succession Narrative, but a close reading of the text does not substantiate this identification. Ishida argued this for two reasons. First, the inscription includes the motif of “priority on the predecessors” (or noble ancestors followed by the unworthy predecessor), but as Ishida admits, this motif is common to all sorts of royal inscriptions (1985, 149–50). Secondly, Ishida asserts that Kilamuwa usurped the throne from his brother since he names his mother, whom Ishida conjectures had a Bathsheba-like role in Kilamuwa’s coup (1985, 148–49). But there is no evidence for this. It requires a major leap to conclude from Kilamuwa’s mention of his mother—the presence of which is itself uncertain—that he acquired the throne accompanied by court intrigues; it is feasible that his brother simply died without siring an heir. Most importantly, the Kilamuwa Inscription does not combat any allegations of illegitimacy or demonstrate the need to justify Kilamuwa’s kingship in any way. No external sources suggest that Kilamuwa’s succession was irregular or accompanied by detractors; neither does internal analysis of the text demand this interpretation.

2.2.3 Apologies Discussed in the Following Chapters

As noted above, my decision to confine this volume to the close study of seven apologetic texts was driven primarily by pragmatism. The texts featured in the following chapters were not chosen arbitrarily, however. I provide a representative array of texts. Whereas Hoffner studied Hittite apologies, Tadmor studied Assyrian apologies, and Dick studied (mostly) Neo-Babylonian apologies, I investigate apologies from several ancient Near Eastern civilizations. I also try to illustrate the difference in how apologies were composed and have been preserved. For example, I examine the Autobiography of Hattusili, the purest example of this rhetorical genre from the ancient Near East, but I also examine the Tel Dan Inscription, which only echoes the apologetic rhetoric of Hazael (and thus could be called an “impure” example of the rhetorical genre). Lastly, because I explore the accusations leveled against these rulers, I treat apologies that exhibit several justifications rather than those that focus primarily on legitimating the ruler. Thus, for example, I include individual chapters on Telipinu and Solomon, even though rulers such as Cyrus and Darius provided arguably superior examples of apologetic overall. The reasons for my selections should become clearer over the course of the study. I turn now to describe briefly my method for treating each apology.

2.3 METHOD OF INVESTIGATING APOLOGIES IN THIS STUDY

In order to accomplish the various objectives of this examination of apologetic, my investigation of each of the seven texts follows a set pattern consisting of four elements.

1. *Circumstances of RN's Accession.* Before introducing each text I provide a narrative of the historical circumstances of the appropriate ruler's accession. This narrative is intended to have two characteristics. First is the noble, if unattainable, goal that the narrative provide "true," "objective" history; it is meant to mine the appropriate ancient texts for historical information and present them without prejudice for or against any propagandistic aim.³² It seeks to present the events of the past as accurately as possible. This goal itself builds on various historical presumptions. First, I respond affirmatively to the recent postmodern challenge questioning whether the past is actually knowable. Although I understand that the quest for objectivity is inevitably futile and that we lack direct access to the past, I see these realities as complicating, but not precluding, historical work.³³

The second presumption underlying this work is that ancient historiographic texts, even those crafted propagandistically with deliberate bias, can furnish the historian with data when examined critically with appropriate attention paid to ideology, genre, and other factors. This issue has become a bugaboo particularly in the debate about the historicity of the united monarchy of Israel. Methodologically, I identify myself closely with the position of Halpern expressed in "The State of Israelite History" (Halpern 2000), even if I often approach the evidence somewhat more skeptically than he does. In fact, I find that the maximalist/minimalist debate is often overblown in regard to David and Solomon; few scholars today espouse extreme viewpoints despite the tendency of some scholars to characterize those who hold opposing views with extreme language. This can be demonstrated by my historical reconstructions of David and Solomon, which consciously adopt the principles of Halpern (whom many would unfairly characterize as a maximalist), yet often resemble the reconstructions of scholars characterized as minimalist.³⁴

32. When constructing histories of ancient coups, it is often far more difficult not to prejudice oneself against the subject of the apology than toward him. Ancient historians are trained to read against the grain—which is a good thing, and a major basis of this dissertation—but this can sometimes produce an unhealthy cynicism that manifests in simply assuming that the opposite of everything one reads is true. In the case of usurping kings, having only their own account of the events and knowing that something irregular occurred, one sometimes struggles to treat them fairly. For example, in his condemning treatment of David, Halpern seems unwilling to even allow for the fact that the biblical narrative could present a positive, honest image of its heroes: "We know that Samuel is accurate because it is nothing but lies" (Halpern 2001, 100).

33. For a detailed response to this from the perspective of a scholar of the ancient Near East, see Stith 2008, 1–19. I would echo the viewpoint he describes for his study to describe my own: "The present study is written from an epistemological viewpoint most akin to the correlation position ... that assumes that there was, in fact, a past, and that one can have knowledge of that past, with reasonable probability, after careful engagement with the available evidence" (Stith 2008, 10).

34. In an essay entitled "The Crisis in Historiography," John Collins helpfully points out that so-called minimalists and maximalists share much methodologically, only the former

The second characteristic of the historical narrative I provide is that I intend it to be as secure as possible. I sacrifice detail for certainty, often providing a sparse outline where other historians might provide far more involved reconstructions. The purpose of this objective, certain historical narrative is to provide the background of the apology, against which it can be analyzed. I attempt to supply what information I can without predisposing the reader toward absolving or convicting the king of the charges to which the apology responds.

In every case, the historical narrative depends at least partially on the apology in question. With the nonbiblical texts, the narrative is supplemented by other contemporary material that provides some external control. The biblical texts (and essentially the Proclamation of Telipinu as well), however, are relatively isolated. Little extrabiblical material from the period in question exists with which to flesh out the historical picture. Thus with these texts the historical narrative is almost entirely the product of a close exegesis of the apologies.

2. *The Text.* After introducing the historical context of each ruler's assumption of the throne, I then describe the text in which we read that ruler's apology. With the nonbiblical texts I provide a physical description of the text, drawing attention to such factors as the state of the text's preservation, whether multiple exemplars exist, etc. I also note the *editio princeps* or the standard edition of each text. I provide an outline of each text, followed by a transliteration and translation.

The biblical texts call for a different approach because we lack ancient attestations, and most of the textual questions are discussed in the accompanying appendices. For the biblical texts I do not include a translation; instead I perform a source-critical analysis. Since the foremost question facing those who read the biblical narratives as apologies involves how we arrive at an "original," "early" text, I attempt to answer this, if only provisionally, in these appendices.

I provide translations of the nonbiblical material both for the sake of accessibility, that is, to allow the reader easy access to each apology, and also to justify my interpretation of certain problematic areas of each text.³⁵ My goal is not to provide a new full edition of each text. Simply repeating the signs (or characters, in the case of the Tel Dan Inscription) would be redundant since all of these texts have been treated multiple times and I have not collated the texts myself. Instead, I attempt to make my interpretation of the text fully transparent. To that end I include not only a translation, but a representation of the original language of each in the appropriate manner. A few comments about this are in order:

do not accept the biblical "master narrative" (Collins 2005, 50). The antipathy resulting from this difference often spills into the conversation, thus "polemical rhetoric often masks substantial agreement" about the details of historical reconstruction (p. 46).

35. The biblical texts, in addition to being prohibitively long, are easily accessible to any reader. In the places where I depart from the Masoretic Text, I discuss it in the appropriate sections of my treatment of David and Solomon.

Hittite: I include the Hittite texts in broad transcription, per the conventions of most Hittitologists. I generally follow the standard established in *GHL*, with a few exceptions—for example, when an *-aC-* sign is used but no vowel is intended (due to the limitations of the cuneiform writing system), I represent the vowel (thus, *ištarakzi* in Hattusili i 44; the signs *iš-tar-ak-zi* likely render a phonetic *ištarkzi* as closely as possible). This is an arbitrary decision to prioritize staying faithful to the given signs over interpreting Hittite phonology. A more significant issue is that I provide eclectic texts; my transcriptions and translations come from a combination of the extant sources. Providing a score of all known exemplars would be ideal, but lies beyond the bounds of this study.

Aramaic: I provide a vocalized version of the Tel Dan Inscription, in line with my attempt to make my interpretation of the text as transparent as possible. Obviously, any vocalization of Old Aramaic is to some extent conjectural, but it should still be useful to the specialist in illuminating how I interpret a given word.

Akkadian: I provide a normalization of the two Akkadian texts. Accurately normalizing Neo-Assyrian and especially Neo-Babylonian can be a vexing enterprise since many formerly strict grammatical rules had largely broken down by this time. When the syllabic text departs from formal Akkadian rules, I follow the text (and often provide a footnote of explanation). When normalizing logograms, I follow stringent Old Babylonian grammar in terms of indicating case, number, etc. In these texts (especially the apology of Nabonidus), however, the case vowels are mostly interchangeable (cf. *ṣ qhr[i]* for the nominative in Nabonidus iv 38'; *mitū* for the oblique in vii 13'; etc.). I do not lengthen open short vowels (i.e., *libbišu* instead of *libbišu*). My two departures from typical Assyriological convention are that I include determinatives in my normalization and that I do not capitalize the first letter of proper names. This may be unnecessary, but it provides extra information. In my translations I generally avoid the determinatives (thus writing “Marduk” instead of “the god Marduk,” or “Nineveh” instead of “the city Nineveh”; for an opposite style see the new RINAP volumes), and by providing the determinatives the scholar can consult my normalization if any question arises. This does lead to some situations that could go either way (for example, GIŠ.TUKUL.MEŠ being rendered ^{giš}*kakkē* in Esarhaddon i 43 even though, presumably, the weapons were not made of wood).

3. *Apologetic Analysis.* The key element in my discussion of each text is the apologetic analysis, in which I explore several facets of the apology. In order to highlight the defensive nature of each apology, I consider various charges that were

likely leveled against the ruler in question. Although most of the charges treated are inferential, the most important are often easy to reconstruct. Such charges may have been publicized or may have circulated only as rumors whispered from one to another away from prying ears. What is certain is that every king in this study took the throne amidst suspicious circumstances and had his fair share of detractors. After listing these accusations, I look at how the king responded to the accusation and justified himself. Because I focus on royal apologies, I pay particular attention in each case to the charge that the king had no right to the throne. Through this examination various aspects of royal ideology become clear, particularly the foundations of royal legitimacy in the ancient Near East.

I also examine the rhetoric employed in each apology, both in general and in the specific responses to accusations. Some, though not all, of these apologies have a distinctly literary flavor that strengthens the propaganda. I also often note the specific rhetorical strategy used to counter individual allegations, specifically whether the strategy is fundamentally transformative or reformative. “Transformative” refers to a rhetorical strategy that does not seek to challenge the facts of the case, but changes how the audience identifies them. For example, Hattusili admits that he usurped the throne from Urhi-Tessup, but he justifies why such action was acceptable, even obligatory. Thus transformative responses tend to be predominantly explanatory or justificatory. “Reformative” refers to a rhetorical strategy that does challenge the facts of the accusation itself; in nearly every case in ancient Near Eastern apologies, reformative strategies involve denial. For example, David’s assertion that he had no role whatsoever in the death of Abner (2 Sam 3:37) epitomizes this strategy. Reformative responses tend to be predominantly absolute.³⁶ Discussing these two types of response may prove helpful in refining

36. This transformative/reformative dichotomy draws on the work of Ware and Linkugel (1973), who themselves built off the cognitive theories of Abelson (1959). All of these scholars describe four strategies (characterized by Abelson as “modes of resolution” to “belief dilemmas,” by Ware and Linkugel as “factors of verbal self-defense”), outlined most clearly in Abelson 1959, 344–46. The first, denial, involves an attack upon the cognitive elements of the belief dilemma and is self-explanatory. The second, bolstering, involves portraying the person to be defended favorably in such a way that his positive attributes outweigh his negative attributes. The third, differentiation, involves changing the audience’s perspective of the act in a way that renders it acceptable. For example, Solomon defends the killing of Adonijah by alerting the audience to Adonijah’s prior treason. Thus, the killing is not murder (a crime, therefore bad) but execution (the administration of justice, therefore good). The fourth, transcendence, involves depicularizing the charge at hand and showing how the action coheres to an acceptable principle. For example, one might argue that the author of the Succession Narrative included a transcendent element by noting that “the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon” (1 Kgs 2:46)—thus the killings were justified in the name of the stability of the kingdom. The categories are not entirely helpful for studies of apologetic, however. Abelson developed them as modes of “*intrapersonal conflict resolution*” (1959, 343, emphasis mine) which Ware and Linkugel then translated to

our understanding of apologetic in the ancient Near East. It is often assumed that transformative strategies are used only when denial is not an option; by assessing the distribution of these strategies and looking at the types of accusations against which they were utilized we can evaluate this claim.

In addition to this, I will examine certain motifs that recur in the texts. These motifs appear in different expressions among the sundry apologies. For detailed discussion of this, see §2.1 above.

the arena of self-defense. In the conclusion of their article, Ware and Linkugel combine these “factors” into various “postures” (absolute, vindictive, explanative, justificative) of self-defense (1973, 282–83), but I find this more confusing than clarifying. I adopt the broader terms transformative and reformatory from Ware and Linkugel, though I use the terms somewhat differently. They categorize denial and bolstering as reformatory, differentiation and transcendence as transformative.

Alternatively, William Benoit has created another scheme for understanding defensive rhetorical strategies. Though he prefers the term “image repair” to “apologetic” since he considers the latter too restrictive (see Benoit 1995, 11–30), and though he deals with corporate rather than individual rhetoric, his work still applies well to apologetic in any area. Benoit attempts to create an exhaustive list of image repair strategies, enumerating fourteen possible strategies which he divides into five categories: denial (1–2 below), evasion of responsibility (3–6 below), reducing offensiveness of event (7–12 below), corrective action (13 below), and mortification (14 below). I list all fourteen below (taken from Benoit 1997, 179; see also the excellent illustrations in Benoit and Drew 1997, 161):

1) Simple Denial – did not perform act	8) Minimization – act not serious
2) Shift the Blame – act performed by another	9) Differentiation – act less offensive
3) Provocation – responded to act of another	10) Transcendence – more important considerations
4) Defeasibility – lack of information or ability	11) Attack Accuser – reduce credibility of accuser
5) Accident – act was a mishap	12) Compensation – reimburse victim
6) Good Intentions – meant well in act	13) Corrective Action – plan to solve or prevent problem
7) Bolstering – stress good traits	14) Mortification – apologize for act

Although the comprehensiveness of Benoit’s scheme is laudable and it could be employed with apologies of the ancient Near East, on the whole I think its complexity would be more burdensome than helpful for the present study—especially given that many of these do not appear in any of the apologies under consideration. (The very thought that an ancient Near Eastern king might apologize for an act is mortifying!) The relatively simple method of bifurcating the responses into transformative and reformatory categories should suffice for this study.

4. *The Sitz im Leben of [Text]*. I conclude the examination of each text with a discussion of the text's *Sitz im Leben*. The reason for this is twofold. First, as rhetorical discourses, apologies contain internal clues as to when and why the compositions were written. One can make inroads into establishing the setting (particularly the date) of an apology's authorship by investigating its exigence. This is, to be sure, somewhat circular—we must interpret a text on the basis of its exigence, but this exigence can only be established from interpreting the text—but it is a problem often inherent to studying ancient literature. One must attempt to explain all the data one has coherently, but one often lacks external controls by which to assess the entire interpretation.³⁷ Of course, when possible, I combine these internal clues with external evidence about a text's provenance for greater precision. In the absence of external evidence, a text's exigence is often the most significant diagnostic feature of its *Sitz im Leben*, yet it is often overlooked. An apology nearly always derives from the lifetime of the person it defends, and it sometimes contains information that can further specify the rhetorical situation in which it found its genesis. The second reason for including this section is to respond to an influential argument of Hayim Tadmor. In his seminal article on apologetic, Tadmor argued that apologies of the ancient Near East tended to have the same function, namely, confirming the legitimacy of the dynasty in order to pave the way for a smooth succession. He wrote that apologies “were written ... in conjunction with the appointment of the successor—a crucial moment in the life of every king and especially of those whose own coming to the throne was not entirely in order” (1983, 37–38). By dedicating a section to the *Sitz im Leben* of each text I will create a sample of seven apologies with which to test Tadmor's hypothesis.

2.4 THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

Previous studies of ancient Near Eastern apologetic have often taken one generally accepted apology (text A), then taken another (text B) and demonstrated through comparative analysis that the latter also qualifies as an apology.³⁸ This approach can be fruitful, but the analysis of text B is always restricted by the nature and origin of text A. Moreover, some (not all) of the studies stop there, as if the purpose of the investigation is simply to categorize the text. But identifying the apologetic

37. For more on this point, with one specific application of my methodology, see §5.2.2 n. 194–95.

38. Examples include Wolf 1967; Hoffner 1975; McCarter 1980; Ishida 1985; and Ishida 1991. I will reiterate here that while comparative analysis is helpful in identifying apologies, the primary tool of identification should not be comparative analysis but individual, internal analysis of the exigence underlying a given text. This is not meant to impeach the usefulness of any of the aforementioned studies, all of which have provided insights into the texts under discussion and have factored into this study.

nature of a text is a means to, not the end of, interpreting the text—as was shown in the discussion in §1.5 about the misinterpretation of apologetic as a literary genre, one cannot draw many specific conclusions about a given text simply because it qualifies as an apology. One might argue that now that the apologetic character of several texts has been amply demonstrated, the urgency of attesting this phenomenon in the ancient Near East has passed.³⁹ That being the case, I believe this is the appropriate time for the study of ancient Near Eastern apologetic to evolve to the next stage. Instead of focusing on the apologetic nature of various texts, we are now equipped to adopt a more synthetic approach to this universal human phenomenon. I therefore offer this study as the first systematic (though not comprehensive) treatment of apologetic in the ancient Near East.

In order to accomplish such a synthesis, the individual analysis of several royal apologies from the ancient Near East will constitute the bulk of this study (chapters 3–9). The apologies derive from disparate cultural contexts but share the underlying exigence of a king who has come to power in irregular fashion defending his assumption of the throne in response to various accusations. This approach to working with apologetic should yield several results. First, the diversity of the texts' backgrounds should demonstrate the transhistorical nature of this phenomenon and thereby show how apologetic can and cannot be used to illuminate ancient texts.⁴⁰ Second, it should provide insight into the royal ideology(-ies) of the cultures that produced these texts. In every text under discussion, the ruler must defend his legitimacy. Examining the rhetorical strategies used should help us understand the central ideas from which ancient Near Eastern kings drew their legitimacy. Additionally, acknowledging that there is no prefabricated structure to which these apologies must conform should allow us to draw valuable historical conclusions about individual texts. Many events described in these apologies have been dismissed by scholars as deriving from conventional motifs instead of having historical value; some of these deserve reanalysis.

39. For example, McCarter's study of the apology of David (1980) was groundbreaking primarily because the study of the concept of ancient Near Eastern apologetic was still in its nascence. Thus McCarter used the established Hattusili apology first to demonstrate that texts of this nature were composed in the ancient world, then applied it to illuminate the character of the David narrative. After such seminal works as Hoffner 1975; McCarter 1980; and Tadmor 1983, there have been several valuable contributions, but they have tended to be of a different nature. Later works no longer felt the burden of justifying the existence of apologetic in the ancient Near East; they had only to analyze certain texts from this perspective.

40. Specifically, the discussion of the texts' backgrounds should illustrate why form criticism is not an acceptable tool for analyzing ancient Near Eastern apologies (see §1.5).

CHAPTER THREE

THE PROCLAMATION OF TELIPINU

3.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF TELIPINU'S ACCESSION

TELIPINU RULED the kingdom of Hatti in the middle of the second millennium BCE, during the latter part of the period of the Old Kingdom. Scholars who employ the Middle Chronology often date his reign from ca. 1525–1500 BCE (for example, Bryce 2005, xv), but without any pegs upon which to hang an absolute chronology this remains only an estimate.¹ A dearth of primary sources confronts the historian of the Hittite Old Kingdom; in fact, the brief retrospective at the beginning of the text under consideration here, Telipinu's Proclamation, continues to provide the only window into the reigns of several rulers. But the "historical" retrospective makes no pretense of presenting objective history, instead portraying a past golden age of Hatti followed by rapid deterioration due to internal strife. This obvious bias notwithstanding, historians have no choice but to turn to the Proclamation for information regarding this period.² With this in mind, I will restrict this section to conclusions that can be drawn from the text with a high degree of

1. Beckman suggests that with the Anatolian evidence, "the Middle Chronology best fits the evidence, although the High Chronology would also be possible" (2000, 25).

2. A few decades ago, Liverani justifiably decried the tendency of historians of the Hittite Old Kingdom to accept the Proclamation uncritically and simply to paraphrase it when outlining this period (2004, 28–31; the study originally appeared in 1977 and was included in the later collection without substantive updating). In the most recent major history of the Hittites, Bryce avoids regurgitating Telipinu's retrospective as some early scholars did, but he remains unduly influenced by Telipinu's evaluation of each reign, so Liverani's critique continues to hold (see Bryce 2005, 96–107). Liverani's own treatment of the text, however, errs too far in the opposite direction, almost denying the possibility that Telipinu might say something true. His attempt to decipher "a genuine message disguised under the formal one" (2004, 49) strains credulity. In this study I attempt to find a middle ground, acknowledging the difference between the objective facts that Telipinu lays out and his propagandistic spin on the events. That is, I assume that the account is trustworthy regarding such information as familial relationships and who ruled when—information that presumably would be well known and difficult to fabricate—but requires careful scrutiny when accusing persons of conspiracy, proclaiming certain kings' reigns as unqualified debacles, etc. One exception is that I do accept Telipinu's assignment of blame for the first three bouts of murder (the culprits being Hantili, Zidanta, and Ammuna respectively) for the dual reasons of *cui bono* and no apparent motive for Telipinu to dissemble about these matters.

confidence, specifically the *dramatis personae* and sequence of events of Telipinu's rise.

The Proclamation informs us that after the reigns of the illustrious kings Labarna,³ Hattusili I, and Mursili I (in the latter part of the seventeenth and the early sixteenth centuries BCE, according to the Middle Chronology), a series of bloody coups shook Hatti. Four consecutive successions involved the assassination of either the king himself or other members of the royal family. First Hantili, the husband of Mursili's sister and a high-ranking official, conspired to assassinate his brother-in-law and seize the throne.⁴ When Hantili reached senescence, a certain Zidanta eliminated several members of his household, including Hantili's son Piseni. Zidanta then ruled, but was assassinated in turn by his own son, Ammuna, who became king. Ammuna eventually passed away—apparently from natural causes⁵—which set in motion a new wave of bloodshed.

Several otherwise unknown persons here enter the focus. The families of Titiya and Hantili (presumably a second man of this name, since we would expect the first to be long dead and gone; see Götze 1957, 56) are murdered; the instigator is identified only as Zurū, “chief of the bodyguard” (GAL LÜ.MEŠ MEŠEDI, ii 5). But Zurū leaves the narrative as quickly as he entered it, and the text reports that a certain Huzziya reigned. At this point Telipinu, who “had Is[t]apariya as his first-rank wife” (*iš[t]apariyan ḫ antezziyan DAM-SU ḫ arta* ii 10) and thus was apparently brother-in-law of the king, drove Huzziya away and ascended the throne.

While Telipinu was off on campaign, Huzziya and his brothers were murdered.⁶ The assembly (*panku*) then sentenced three men to death, but Telipinu pardoned them on the grounds that “they will not pursue the matter” (*nu≈war≈uš IGI.ḪI.A-wa munnanzi*, ii 29). The final event mentioned in the retrospective of the Proclamation is the death of Telipinu's wife and son. He records that each died but provides no details. Telipinu then laments the spread of bloodshed and the text shifts from narrative to edict.

3. As previous historians of the Hittite Old Kingdom have noted, it now seems secure that Labarna (I) was an historical person and not the invention of Telipinu's confused scribes (Dinçol et al. 1993, 104–5; see also Bryce 2005, 64–66; Beal 2003, 13 n. 2).

4. With most commentators, I infer that Hantili became king from Telipinu's later comment that he “began to become a god” (*n≈aš DINGIR-L[IM-iš] kikkiššūwan / dāiš*, i 63'–64'), an idiom reserved for kings, despite the fact that he is never mentioned as having “ruled” (*ḫ aššūē*). Riemschneider, however, suggests that Hantili may have been only a steward (*Reichsverweser*), and never a king *per se* (1971, 91). This idea has not gained much traction, but is feasible. In any event, Hantili's precise status has little bearing on this study.

5. I infer this from the traditional royal death notice that “Ammuna became a god” (*ammunaš≈a DINGIR-LIM-iš kišat*, ii 4) and the lack of mention of any foul play in the Proclamation.

6. This is mentioned in ii 26, a severely abraded line. Both the crime and Huzziya's name can be confidently restored, however; see pp. 85–86 n. 52 in §3.2.2 and the discussion below.

Several scholars have attempted to fill in the gaps in this history, especially with respect to the relationships among the various people. How the main players were related to one another influences how one reconstructs the history of the period (as can be seen in Götze 1957; *CAH* 2/1, 659–83; Astour 1989; Bryce 2005, and others), the Hittite rules for succession (as can be seen in Riemschneider 1971; Beckman 1986a; Sürenhagen 1998, and others), and the forthrightness of Telipinu's account of events (as can be seen especially in Hoffner 1975 and Liverani 2004). One recent breakthrough was made in the study of Forlanini (2010), who outlined two major Hittite royal lines, emanating from a southern royal family (of which Telipinu was a member) and a northern royal family (of which Huzziya was a member). A complex network of intermarriages was intended to keep the two families united, but it failed to do so in the generations prior to Telipinu as each side vied to maintain control by eliminating important members of the other household.⁷ Still, disagreements remain about many individual points,⁸ and at times we must resort to the best possible hypothesis. Those questionable points of interpretation that impact my analysis of the Proclamation are dealt with in the appropriate locations below.

3.2 THE TEXT

The Proclamation of Telipinu is a long text; the primary exemplar, KBo III 1+ (Exemplar A in Hoffmann 1984) spans four columns and over 250 lines. The exemplars all preserve several horizontal ruling lines which early editors used to divide the text into fifty “paragraphs”; all later editions, including mine below, follow these paragraph divisions.⁹ The Proclamation survives in several fragmentary exemplars, the most complete of which (Hoffmann's Exemplar A) preserves about half the text. An eclectic edition combining all of the preserved fragments can reproduce most of the text, but a few sections are almost completely missing. Although Telipinu himself presumably commissioned the text during the Hittite Old Kingdom, the extant copies all date from the Empire period, with the earliest (Hoffmann's Exemplar B) likely dating to the fourteenth century BCE (Beckman 1986b, 571). The numerous exemplars attest to the popularity of the

7. This is conveyed most clearly in Forlanini 2010, but it sheds light on the thesis of Sürenhagen 1998. The two rival families were also anticipated by Gurney (*CAH* 2/1, 663).

8. For example, compare the various diagrams of the royal family tree(s) in Riemschneider 1971, 97; Sürenhagen 1998, 93; and Forlanini 2010, 119–20.

9. There is slight variation among different exemplars as to where the horizontal rulings appear, especially in the first column (see p. 81 nn. 26–27 in §3.2.2 below).

Proclamation,¹⁰ as does the fact that two Akkadian copies demonstrate that it was viewed as worthy of translation into the cultured literary repertoire.¹¹

Various obstacles make the Proclamation the least accessible of the texts under consideration in this study. The aforementioned fragmentary nature of all the exemplars leaves several gaps, and the paucity of historical texts pertaining to the Hittite Old Kingdom often prevents us from filling them. The Akkadian copies add little to the Hittite text, and in one critical section where the Hittite is mostly missing (§§14–17), the extant Akkadian version diverges so markedly from the Hittite traces as to render the versions irreconcilable. Additionally, Inge Hoffmann's *Der Erlaß Telipinus* (1984) remains the only widely available critical edition of the Proclamation.¹² This edition is useful, but it contains some substantive flaws, not least of which is the fact that the philological commentary is restricted to five excursuses on individual words and phrases.¹³ Until recently the only easily accessible English translation was the dated, and abridged, version in Sturtevant and Bechtel 1935, 182–93.¹⁴ Fortunately this has been remedied by its inclusion in two recent ancient Near Eastern anthologies; see *COS* 1.76 and *HST* 107. My own edition of the text appears below.

My outline of the text varies somewhat from how most scholars break it down. I distinguish between three major sections (retrospective, autobiography, and edict); others distinguish between only two, an historical prologue (containing both my retrospective and autobiography) and ensuing reforms (see *COS* 1.76; *HST* 107). In a similar vein, I use the term “edict” to refer only to the final section of the text; when referring to the text as a whole I use “Proclamation,” which I think is more appropriate. Some previous commentators have dubbed the entire text the Edict (German *Erlaß*) of Telipinu, but this predisposes the reader towards treating the first two sections as simply a preface instead of an integral part of the discourse. The first section, §§1–22, contains an historical retrospective of Teli-

10. Of the Hittite text, Hoffmann asserts that there is a minimum of five exemplars (1984, 5), though she assigns sigla to nine. Starke critiques two of her potential joins, thus demanding a minimum of seven exemplars (1985, 101). Goedegebuure writes that ten copies survive (*HST* 107, 229). In addition to these Hittite copies, two exemplars of an Akkadian version also survive.

11. Starke 1985, 109–11 and Beckman 1986b, 571; *contra* Hoffmann 1984, 8–9, who suggests that the text was originally composed in Akkadian and later translated into Hittite. Hoffmann provides only one, rather questionable, piece of supporting evidence for this, which fails to persuade in light of the evidence suggesting a Hittite original (laid out most clearly in Starke's review).

12. Werner Eisele completed the dissertation “Der Telipinu-Erlass” in 1970 at Munich, but it was not widely distributed.

13. For more on Hoffmann's edition, see the especially scathing review by Starke (1985) as well as the more moderate review by Beckman (1986b).

14. Bryce also provided a translation (1983, 132–39), but this is not widely available.

pinu’s predecessors and describes how strife within the royal family eroded the stability of the entire state. The retrospective leads to an autobiographical section (§§23–27) describing Telipinu’s assumption of the throne and early reign. The text concludes with an edict (§§28–50) consisting of various reforms. The first reforms inaugurate new rules of succession and prescribe how to deal with future bloodshed within the royal family, but they are followed by a series of apparently agricultural reforms and some casuistic laws for dealing with criminals. The relationship among the various sections of the edict is not immediately clear; for more see §3.4 below.

3.2.1 Outline

I	§§1–9 = i 1–31a	Retrospective: The Prosperous Reigns of the Great Kings
II	§§10–22 = i 31b–ii 12	Retrospective: Strife and Assassination Become Commonplace within the Royal Family
III	§§23–27 = ii 13–35	Autobiography: The Rule of Telipinu
IV	§28 = ii 36–39	Edict: New Rules for Succession
V	§§29–34 = ii 40–iii 3’	Edict: Rules for Dealing with Future Crimes within the Royal Family
VI	§§35–41 = iii 4’–60’	Edict: Agricultural (??) Reforms
VII	§§42–50 = iii 61’–iv 34’	Edict: Other Reforms (§§42–43, 45 almost completely lost; §44, 46–47 too broken for confident reconstruction)
VIII	iv 35’–36’	Colophon

I. The retrospective begins several generations before Telipinu, during the reign of Labarna. Telipinu recounts the successful reigns of Labarna and his two successors, Hattusili I and Mursili I.¹⁵ He proclaims these three rulers as having maintained order in their families (i 2–4, 13–16, 24–27), and this order translated to national prosperity. This prosperity, however, was not to last.

II. Mursili was assassinated as the result of a plot between his brother-in-law, Hantili, and the enigmatic figure Zidanta.¹⁶ This act abruptly terminated the golden age and inaugurated an era of decline for the kingdom. Although Hantili

15. The Proclamation conveniently overlooks Hattusili I’s disavowal of his nephew, the younger Labarna, skipping this generation entirely. This hiccup in the succession is recounted in Hattusili’s Bilingual Testament, for which see *HST* 106.

16. It is almost universally acknowledged that Zidanta was the son-in-law of Hantili. This is based on a plus in KUB XI 1 i 32, at the beginning of §11, mentioning the daughter of Hantili. Following Götze (1957, 55), most scholars assume that this is a fragment of a reference to Zidanta’s marriage to the daughter of Hantili, perhaps intended to seal their alliance (Astour 1989, 21). This restoration is very likely—especially since KUB XI 1

apparently died of natural causes, the gods punished him through the captivity of his wife and son and the diminution of the land of Hatti (Bryce 2005, 100–101). The bloodshed continued when, at the end of Hantili's life, his erstwhile coconspirator Zidanta murdered his entire progeny and seized the throne for himself. Zidanta, in turn, was assassinated by his son Ammuna. Like Hantili, Ammuna apparently died of natural causes, but more subject lands continued to revolt and the army encountered repeated setbacks. At Ammuna's death a new wave of assassination occurred, instigated by "Zurū, chief of the bodyguard" (ii 5). Several more figures whose precise positions within the royal family are difficult to discern here kill and are killed, eventually resulting in the accession of Huzziya. This Huzziya seeks the life of Telipinu, but Telipinu drives him away.

III. Telipinu, whose own background is referenced only obliquely, assumes the throne and commences his rule with mercy—unlike his murderous predecessors, Telipinu allows Huzziya's family to live. After describing one campaign, Telipinu continues to demonstrate his mercy by commuting a death sentence for those involved in the coup that placed Huzziya on the throne. Unfortunately, this does not prevent further bloodshed, and when Telipinu's wife and son die (the circumstances are not provided), he calls an assembly to issue his edict.

IV. Telipinu begins the edict by establishing a patrilineal system of royal succession from father to son.

V. In an effort to prevent bloodshed from again running rampant through the royal family, Telipinu establishes certain rules for dealing with crimes within the royal family. The primary recurring theme of the rules is to punish only the perpetrator of a misdeed; the estate and family of the perpetrator are not to be confiscated or in any way harmed. Telipinu also places the responsibility for enforcing proper conduct of the king and royal family on the assembly (*panku*).

VI. This section of the Proclamation is mostly broken, but Telipinu seems to issue a series of agricultural reforms (evidenced by the numerous attestations of grain and "storehouse[s]," É[.MEŠ] ^{NA4}KIŠIB). Many treat this section as something of a *non sequitur*, but I argue below that it coheres with Telipinu's overarching purpose in issuing the Proclamation.

VII. The concluding paragraphs of the Proclamation appear to present a selection of miscellaneous reforms, though again the lack of preserved text precludes any secure understanding. The final three paragraphs are mostly complete

belongs to Hoffmann's Exemplar B, the earliest preserved copy of the Proclamation—but not definitive.

It is also possible that Zidanta was the son of Mursili I (the same man whom he conspired to assassinate). Sürenhagen argues this on the basis of a variant reading of the Proclamation which says that the gods punished Zidanta not for the blood of Piseni, but for "the blood of his father" (KUB XI 5 obv. 8'; see p. 83 n. 41 to i 66' in §3.2.2; also Hoffmann 1984, 24 n. 3; for the discussion see Sürenhagen 1998, 89). This variant could be a scribal error, however; note the similar phrase in the following paragraph (i 69'–70').

and concern proper procedure for dealing with inheritance, murder, and sorcery, respectively.

3.2.2 Broad Transcription and Translation

The following is an eclectic text, since a full edition is well beyond the scope of this study. There are admittedly some drawbacks to an eclectic edition of a text whose various exemplars stem from different phases of the language (and even different languages, if one incorporates the Akkadian translation as I do)—for an assessment of these differences, see Starke 1985, 103–11. Nevertheless, I think the edition is beneficial to provide the reader with immediate access to one of the lesser-known texts under investigation in this study. Column and line numbers follow KBo III 1+ (though the line numbers are one off for the first column of KBo III 1 since the top line, i 1, is entirely missing). Where this exemplar is substantially missing, I follow the enumeration of Hoffmann 1984. The transcription also follows KBo III 1 unless noted otherwise; where this exemplar is missing I follow any extant fragment, noting variations where duplicates disagree. The standard edition of the Proclamation remains Inge Hoffmann's *Der Erlaß Telipinus* (= Hoffmann 1984).

i 1 ¹⁷	[UMMA ^m]tabarna ¹⁸ ^m telip[i]nu LUGAL GAL
i 2	[kar]ū ^m labarnaš LUGAL GAL ēšta n≈apa [DUMU.ME]Š-ŠU
i 3	[ŠEŠ.ME]Š-ŠU ^{LÜ.MEŠ} gaenaš≈šešš≈a ^{LÜ.MEŠ} h aššannaš≈šaš ⁹ U
i 4	ERIM.MEŠ-ŠU ²⁰ taruppan[t]eš ešer
i 5	nu utnē tepu ēšta kuwatta≈aš laḫ h a≈ma paizzi
i 6	nu ^{LÜ} KÜR-an utnē kuttanit taruḫ h aḫḫarta
i 7	nu utnē h arninkišket nu utnē arḫa tarranut
i 8	nu≈uš arunaš irḫ uš iēt măn≈aš laḫ h az≈ma EGIR-pa uezzi

17. The entire first line of KBo III 1, and all but the lower traces of a few signs on the second line, are missing, so technically the numbering for this column should have primes. Since KBo III 67 demonstrates beyond a reasonable doubt what the missing portion of KBo III 1 looked like, however, I omit the primes here. Because of this, the line numbers here are consistently one higher than on the copy in KBo III 1 itself.

18. Although *tabarna* is a title rather than a PN, I preserve the determinative ^m based on the similar introduction to the Autobiography of Hattusili III (see i 1 of this text in §4.2.2).

19. For this peculiar genitival expression with the possessive pronoun -šaš, see HHw: 45 sub h aššatar. One would expect the nominative common plural possessive pronoun -šiš (or -šeš) as in i 14 below.

20. According to the size of the lacunae of KBo III 1, ERIM.MEŠ-ŠU is probably on line 3 of this exemplar following the extant U. Since it is actually preserved on KBo III 67 i 4, however, I put it on line 4 here.

- i 9 *nu DUMU.MEŠ-ŠU kuišša kuwatta utnē paizzi*
-
- i 10 ^{URU}*h* ^{URU}*ūpišna* ^{URU}*tūwanuwa* ^{URU}*nenašša* ^{URU}*lānda* ^{URU}*zallara*
- i 11 ^{URU}*paršuḥ anta* ^{URU}*lūšna nu utnē maniyah* *h ešker*
- i 12 *nu URU.DIDLI.ḪI.A GAL.GAL-TIM tittiyanter²¹ ešer*
-
- i 13 EGIR-*pa≈ma*²² ^m*h* *attušiliš* *h aššūēt n≈apa apell≈a* DUMU.MEŠ-ŠU
- i 14 ŠEŠ.MEŠ-ŠU ^{LÜ.MEŠ}*gaenaš≈šeš* ^{LÜ.MEŠ}*h aššanaš≈šiš≈a* U ERIM.MEŠ-ŠU
- i 15 *t[a]ruppanteš ešer kuwatta≈aš laḥ* *h a≈ma paizzi*
- i 16 *nu apāšš≈a* ^{LÜ}KÚR-an *utnē kuttanit taruḥ* *h anḥarta*
-
- i 17 *nu utnē h arninkišket nu utnē arḥa tarranut nu≈uš arunaš*
- i 18 *irḥ uš iēt mān≈a≈apa* [l]aḥ *h az≈ma* EGIR-*pa uezzi nu* DUMU.MEŠ-ŠU
- i 19 *kuišša kuwatta ut[n]ē paizzi apell≈a* ŠU-i
- i 20 URU.DIDLI.ḪI.A GAL.GAL-TIM *tittiyanter²¹ ešer*
-
- i 21 *mān appezziyan≈ma* Ì[R].MEŠ DUMU.MEŠ LUGAL [m]aršeššer *nu* É.MEŠ-ŠUNU
- i 22 *karipūwan dāer iṣḥ a[š]≈a≈šmaš≈šan²³ taštašeškeuwan dāer*
- i 23 *nu ešḥ ar≈šummit²⁴ ēššūwan tiēr*
-
- i 24 *mān* ^m*muršiliš* ^{URU}*h* *attuši* L[UGAL]-ē²⁵ *n≈apa apell≈a* DUMU.MEŠ-ŠU
- i 25 ŠEŠ.MEŠ-ŠU ^{LÜ.MEŠ}*gaenaš≈šiš* ^{LÜ.MEŠ}*h a[š]annaš≈šaš* U ERIM.MEŠ-ŠU
- taruppanteš*
- i 26 *ešer nu* ^{LÜ}KÚR-an *utnē kuttanit taruḥ* *h anḥarta*

21. *tittiyanter* is a plural nominative participle from *tittiya*-. Its meaning in this passage is debated; suggestions include “ging es wohl” (from the typical meaning of *tittiya*- “suckle, nourish”; Hoffmann 1984, 15), “made progress” (COS 1.76:194), and “were assigned” (Hoffner 1963, 207). For a survey of evidence concerning this word, see Beal 1988, 274–77 n. 41. I tentatively translate “were associated,” following one of Beal’s suggestions, with the implication that under Labarnaš auspices the great cities of Hatti were joined in a confederation. See also i 20 below.

22. Reading EGIR-*pa≈ma* with KUB XI 1 i 13; the traces on KBo III 1 i 13 suggest [EGIR-*p*]a and KBo III 67 i 13 reads EGIR-ŠU≈ma.

23. Following *GHL* §4.2 n. 22, I interpret *iṣḥ ašas* the dative-locative plural form of *iṣḥ a*- “lord.” Therefore, the suffix -*šmaš* must be the dative-locative plural form of the possessive pronoun. This form is, however, absent from the paradigm in *GHL* §6.4.

24. With van den Hout (COS 1.76:194 n. 9) and others, I read the first-person plural possessive pronoun -*šummit* as an error. The third-person plural possessive pronoun -*šmet* is expected.

25. This reading is uncertain, but it matches the traces and the size of the lacuna well. Although this was written *h a-aš-šu-u-e-et* in KBo III 1 i 13, the same exemplar reads LUGAL-*u-e-et* in ii 9, and there is not enough room for the fully syllabic writing here. KUB XI 1 i 24 reads [...] -*u-e-et*.

- i 27 [nu] utnē [ar]ḫ a tarranut nu≈uš [arun]aš irḫ uš iēt
-
- i 28 [n≈a]š^{URU}ḫ alpa pait nu^{URU}ḫ alpan ḫarnikta nu^{URU}ḫ alpaš NAM.RA.MEŠ
āššu≈ššet
- i 29 [^{URU}]ḫ attuši udaš EGIR-pa≈ma≈aš^{URU}KÁ.DINGIR.RA pait nu^{URU}KÁ.
DINGIR.RA-an [ḫ]arnikta
- i 30 [ERIM.MEŠ ḫ]urlušš≈a ḫ ullet [nḫ^{URU}KÁ.DINGIR.RA-aš
NAM.R[A.M]EŠ āššu≈ššet [^{URU}ḫ]a[ttuš]
- i 31 pē ḫ artā⁶ mḫ antil[iš≈a] LÚSĪLA.ŠU.DUḪ.A-aš ēšta nu≈za^fḫ a[raps]lin
- i 32 NIN^mmuršili DAM-anni ḫ artā⁷ [nu^mzi]danta[š A]NA^mḫ antili [katḫan
- i 33 šarā ulešta nu ḪUL-lu ut[tar iēr] nu≈ka[n^m]muršilin ku[en]ner
- i 34 nu ēšḫ ar iēr
-
- i 35 [nu^mḫ anṭiliš naḫ šariyatati [nḫ]≈x≈kan²⁸ paḫ [...].MEŠ≈an pa[ḫ]šer
- i 36 [...] kuwatta pait utnēan[za ...] ^{URU}[...]taš
- i 37 [...]yaš²⁹ ^{URU}ḫ urpanaš^{URU}kargam[iš ...]
- i 38 [...]wan tiēr nu≈kan ERIM.MEŠ-an [...]
-
- i 39 [mān^mḫ a]ntiliš≈a^{URU}tagarama ā[raš nu memiške]uwan
- i 40 [dāiš k]i≈wa iyanun kuit nu≈wa^mzidan[taš ...]aš
- i 41 [... ištam]aššun³⁰ [traces in erasure ...]it
- i 42 [...] {ša^mmuršili}³¹ ēšḫ ar DINGIR.MEŠ-iš šanḫ[er]
-

26. Unlike KBo III 1, KUB XI 1 has horizontal lines indicating section breaks after lines 30 (which ends with *pē ḫ artā*) and 31 (which ends with *DAM-anni ḫ artā*). Although I follow KBo III 1 as my master text, I have translated these below with separate paragraph headings (§§10–11) since nearly all other translators do.

27. See the previous footnote for the difference in section breaks between KBo III 1 and KUB XI 1. At the beginning of line 32, KUB XI 1 has a fragmentary insertion: [...] x-an DUMU.MUNUS^mḫ a-an-te-li ... “[...] ... daughter, Hanteli ...”

28. Hoffmann (1984, 20) reads sign x as -ḫ ḏ-; it is only preserved on KUB XI 1 i 35, where the copy strongly suggests ERIM, which is nonsensical in context.

29. Hoffmann restores the first two cities on the list as ^{URU}Aš-[ta-t]a-aš // [^{URU}Šu-uk-zi?]-ḫ a-aš “As[tat]a, [Suk?]ziya” (1984, 20–21).

30. This entire word is preserved in the earliest transliteration (BoTU II 41), but the first half is absent from the copy in KBo III 1 i 41 and the collated transliteration done by Hoffmann (1984, 20).

31. Here and elsewhere I use braces { } to indicate that the text is preserved in Akkadian copies of the text. Since in some places there is a substantial amount of Akkadian (for example, §15 below), I do not attempt to retroject the text into Hittite. In this case, the most likely Hittite reconstruction would be the genitive ^mmuršiliyaš. This minor Akkadian contribution is found in KUB I 89 i’ 3’.

i 43 ³²	[... ERIM.MEŠ <i>h</i>]urlušKA ₅ .HI.A-uš <i>h</i> [aḥḥ allaš p]aṛhanduš [uḍrer
i 44	[... A]NA [KUR] ^{URU} <i>h</i> atti uet [...t]a
i 45	[... ut]nē ueḥ at[at ...]
i 46	[...] uerer na[...]
i 47 ³³	{[...] ^{lu.meš} <i>h</i> urri ištu mātiya ukaššidū}
i 48'	{[...] qadu mārīšu ina ^{uru} šugazziya}
i 49'	{[...] ^h arapšili šarratu imtar[a] <i>h</i> mā
i 50'	{[...] ^m ilaliūmma mār ē[kalli a]na warkīšu}
i 51'	{[...] awīli bīt ^{uru} šugazziya}
i 52'	{[...] anda ite[n]irri[š ...]umma [...]qa}
i 53 ³⁴	[...] MUNUS.LUGAL ^{URU} šukziya]a
i 54'	[...] akkiške[uwa]n [d]āiš
i 55'	[... ^m ilali]u[m]a≈ašta [DUMU].MEŠ É.GAL
i 56'	parā [d]uddamili ³⁵ ui[yat nu]≈za [...]et
i 57'	MUNUS.LUGAL ^{URU} šukziya≈wa akuš≈an≈k[an {iṣ batūšu qadu mārīšu} ... kuen]ner

32. KUB III 89 i' 4'–9' preserves a significant portion of the Akkadian version of this paragraph (§14), but the extant sections are difficult to reconcile with the Hittite version. There are three points of contact: the mention of Hurrians, the land Hatti, and the overturning of the land. The Akkadian version in full reads: [...] x ^{lu.meš}*h* urri imērū/ [...] ina eliṣunu uštāḥ izzū/ [...] is[anqūni]mma māt ^{uru}*h* atti/ [...] u ina lib[bi] mātīm iṣḥ urū / [...] abikta[m] ana eliṣunu / [...] ikšudū “[...] ... Hurrians, donkeys / [...] against them they seized / [...] they [ca]me [and] the land Hatti / [...] and in the mid[st] of the land they overturned / [...] against them defeat / [...] they [achi]eved.”

33. Only one sign of this entire paragraph (§15) is preserved in any Hittite exemplar, a ZI at the end of KBo III 1 i 51'. I therefore include above the fragmentary Akkadian version found in KUB III 89 i' 10'–16'.

34. Fragments of two parallel Akkadian exemplars preserve parts of this section, and although they are difficult to piece into the preserved Hittite exemplars directly, they deserve inclusion here.

KUB III 89 i' 17'–20' preserves: [...] ^{lu}nakrika [...] / [...] ma u mannu [...] / [...] x li x x [...] / [...] nakrika [...] “[...] ... your enemy [...] / [...] and who [...] / [...] ... [...] / [...] your enemy [...].”

KBo I 27 lines 1'–4' preserve: [...] ^{lu}nakriya šīt [...] / [...] ^mil[ali]u[m] mār ē<kal>lim [...] / [...] x x x šarratu iqbiū x [...] / [...] iṣ batūšu qadu mārīšu [...] “[...] my enemy, she [...] / [...] Il[ali]u[m], palace attendant (lit. ‘son of the palace’) [...] / [...] ... the queen, they said ... [...] / [...] they seized him/her together with his/her sons [...].” I have incorporated the final line of this exemplar into my edition of the text above.

35. KBo III 67 ii 1 preserves *du-ud-da-mi-li*, which is likely a scribal error for *du-ud-du-mi-li*.

- i 58'³⁶ *mān* ^m*h* *antiliš* MUNUS.LUGAL^{URU} *šuk*[*ziya U DUMU.MEŠ-ŠU*]
i 59' EGIR-*an šanaḥ ta kuiš≈war≈aš≈kan ku[enta(...)]*
i 60' GAL DUMU.MEŠ Ê.GAL *h* *alukan udaš n≈apa [h aš]šataf...*
i 61' *anda tarupper nu≈uš* ^{URU}*taga[rama*³⁷ ...]
i 62' *nu≈uš≈šan h aḥḥ allaš paḥter š≈e [...]*
i 63'³⁸ *mān* ^m*h* *antiliš≈a*^{LÜ}ŠU.G[I *kišat*] *n≈aš* DINGIR-L[IM-*iš*] *kikkiššūwan*³⁹
i 64' *dāiš nu≈kan* ^m*zidanta[š* ^m*pišenin*] DUMU ^m*h* *antiliQADU DUMU.MEŠ-ŠU*
i 65'⁴⁰ *kuenta h antezāiušš≈a* ÌR.MEŠ-ŠU *kuenta*

i 66' ^m*zidantaš≈a* LUGAL-[*u*]ēt *n≈apa* DINGIR.MEŠ [^m*piše*]*niyaš iṣḥ a*⁴¹
šanḥ er

36. The Akkadian version parallels the Hittite more closely here than in the previous paragraphs, but in the final lines the correspondence is again imperfect. KBo I 27 lines 5'–10' read: [... ^m*h* *aḥḥeli šarrat* ^{URU}*šuk*[*ziya* ...] / [...] *it mannum idūksunūti* [...] / [...] *ma ana bābi ušteš* š *ini* [...] / [...] *kimtašu iṣ š abbatīšu* [...] / [...] -*x-h* *a ublūšunūti ina kazziri* [...] / [...] -*x-nuši* “[... Han]teli the queen of Suk[*ziya* ...] / [...] ... “Who killed them?” [...] / [...] ... he brought them to the gate ... [...] / [...] his family was seized ... [...] / [...] ... they brought them to ... [...] / [...] ...”

It is odd that the chief of the palace attendants does not appear anywhere in the preserved portion of the Akkadian version; however, it is conceivable that the enigmatic *kazziri* of line 9' could be a form of *kāš iru* “household official” (though one would expect a *lú* determinative); cf. CAD K: 265 sub *kāš iru* B.

37. Götze (1957, 56 n. 39) reads “Tagalaha(?)” on the basis of ^{URU}*ta-ga*-[...] in KBo III 67 ii 6' combined with the Akkadian [...-*l*]*a-h* ain KBo I 27 line 9'. I think this draws too close a connection between the Hittite and Akkadian versions, however, and prefer to read the known Hittite city Tagarama.

38. The Akkadian version (KBo I 27 lines 11'–15' + 223/g, for the latter fragment see Otten 1938, 43) corresponds closely to the Hittite in this paragraph: [... ^m*h* *antēli ištib ana šimtišu il[lik ...]* / [...] ^m*pišeni mār* ^m*h* *anteliḫ* [...] / *u* [...] *idūkma x* [...] / *itel*[*i ... M*]EŠ *ša* ^m*piš[eni ...]* / *u* ^m*ammun*[*a ...*] *ša* [...] / *itepšu u'* [...] “[... Hante]li became old (and) he we[nt] to his fate [...] / [...] Piseni son of Hanteli ... [...] / and [...] he killed and ... [...] / [he] we[nt] up [...]s of Pis[eni ...] / and Ammun[*a ...*] ... [...] / he/they did *and* [...]”

39. This word is preserved only in KBo III 67 ii 9', where it reads *ki-ik-ki-uš-šu-u-wa-an*. With Hoffmann (1984, 24), I take the sign UŠ as a scribal error for IŠ; the difference between the two is only one vertical wedge at the right edge of the sign.

40. The primary exemplar for this section of text, KBo III 67, does not include a paragraph divider after this line, but the only other extant exemplar, KUB XI 5, does. Since other scholars universally mark a paragraph division here in their treatments of the text, I follow suit in order to avoid confusion.

41. KUB XI 5 obv. 8' reads [DIN]GIR.MEŠ.ḪI.A *addaš ešḥ ar≈šet* “the [go]ds [sought] the blood of his father (lit. ‘of the father, his blood’)”; the reading above is a combination of KUB XIX 96 ii' 1 (DINGIR.MEŠ) and KBo III 67 ii 12' ([^m*piše*]*niyaš iṣḥ a*).

- i 67' *nu≈šši* [^m]ammunan *ḥ aššanda*⁴² DINGIR.MEŠ ^{LÚ}KÚR-ŠU⁴³ *iēr*
- i 68' *nu≈kan* ^mzidantan *adda(n)≈ššan kuenta*
- i 69' ^mammunašš≈a LUGAL-uēt *n≈apa* DINGIR.MEŠ *attaš≈ša*⁴⁴ ^mzidantaš
- i 70' *ēšḥ ar≈šet šanḥ er n≈an kišša[r]i≈šši ḥ alkiuš*
- i 71' GEŠTIN.ḪI.A-uš⁴⁵ GU₄.ḪI.A-uš UDU.ḪI.A-uš U[L ...] *kiššari*
- ii 1 KUR-e≈ma≈šši *kūrurēt* ^U[^{RU}...]ag[g]aš [^{URU}...]laš ^{URU}galmiyaš
- ii 2 ^{URU}adaniy[aš] KUR ^{URU}arzamiya ^{URU}šallapaš ^{URU}parduwataš
^{URU}ah *ḥ ulašš≈a*
- ii 3 *lah ḥ a≈ma kuwatta* ERIM.MEŠ-uš *paiz*⁴⁶ *n≈e āppa UL SIG₅-in*
- ii 4 *uēškanta mān* ^mammunašš≈a DINGIR-LIM-iš *kišat*
- ii 5 ^mzurūšš≈a GAL ^{LÚ}.MEŠ MEŠEDI *duddumili apēdaš≈pat* UD.KAM.ḪI.A-aš
- ii 6 *ḥ aššannaš≈šaš* DUMU-ŠU^mtaḥ *urwailin LÚ^{GIŠ}ŠUKUR GUŠKIN pīēt*
- ii 7 *nu≈za≈kan* ^mtittiyaš *ḥ aššatar* QADU DUMU.MEŠ-ŠU *kuenta*
-
- ii 8 ^mtaruḥ *šunn≈a*^{LÚ}KAŠ₄.E *pīēt nu≈kan* ^mḥ antilin QADU DUMU.MEŠ-ŠU
- ii 9 *ku[en]ta nu* ^mḥ uzziyaš LUGAL-uēt^mtelipinušš≈a≈z
- ii 10 ⁱš[t]apariyan *ḥ antezziyan* DAM-SU⁷ *ḥ arta*
- ii 11 *mān≈uš≈kan* ^mḥ uzziyaš *kuenta nu uttar išduwāti*

42. KUB XIX 96 ii' 2 reads DUMU-a(n)≈šš[an] “h[is] son”; the reading above follows KUB XI 5 obv. 9'.

43. KUB XI 1 ii 3' reads ^{LÚ}KÚR.MEŠ “enemies”; the reading above follows KBo III 67 ii 13'.

44. Reading *at-ta-aš-ša-aš* (*attaš≈šaš* “of his father”) with KUB XI 6 i' 3' over *ad-da-aš* (*addaš* “father”) with KUB XI 5 obv. 11'. Either of these is feasible. The entire phrase should literally be translated, “the gods sought of his father Zidanta, his blood.”

45. KUB XI 5 obv. 12' has a slightly different reading here: [...-i]š ^{GIŠ}GEŠTIN.ḪI.A-uš. The inclusion or exclusion of the determinative is not problematic, but the final -iš of the previous word, if not a modern copyist error, is inexplicable. No accusative form of *ḥ alki* ends in -iš; see *GHL* §4.23.

46. *CHD* (L–N: 4 sub *lah ḥ a-* 1.1'), followed by Starke (1985, 112) and van den Hout (*COS* 1.76:196), interpret ERIM.MEŠ-uš as a nominative, either through emendation or a later modernization of the text. This reading still encounters the problem of the singular verb *paizzi*, however, and the following plural *uēškanta* demonstrates that ERIM.MEŠ is not treated as a collective (although it is elsewhere in the text; see ii 18 below). I therefore follow Hoffmann (1984, 26–27) and read the unexpressed third-person singular “he” as the subject of the verb, although it is admittedly not an intuitive reading.

47. Hoffmann reads NIN-ZU <DAM> here, translating with the insertion “Und Telipinu hatte Ištapariya, seine erste Schwester <zur Frau>” (1984, 26–27; cf. also *COS* 1.76:196). While one could explain such an omission by haplography (DAM-SÚ seems to me more probable than simply DAM); it is equally likely that the sign Hoffmann reads as NIN is simply DAM—the two signs are indistinguishable at this stage (Beckman 1986b, 571). Alternatively, *CHD* (L–N: 426 sub *nega-* a.2'.a') reads NIN-SÚ only and assumes that “as wife” was understood here.

- ii 12 *nu≈uš^mtelipinuš arḥ a paraḥta*
-
- ii 13 5 Š[E]Š.MEŠ-ŠU *nu≈šmaš É.MEŠ taggašta pāndu≈wa≈z ašandu*
 ii 14 *nu≈wa≈[z]a azzikkandu akkuškandu idālu≈ma≈šmaš≈kan lē ku[itki]*⁴⁸
 ii 15 *taggašši nu taršikemi apē≈wa≈mu idalu iēr ug≈a≈war≈uš [ḪUL-lu UL iyami]*⁴⁹
-
- ii 16 *mān≈šan^mtelipinuš INA* ^{GIŠ}GU.ZA *ABI≈YA ēšḫ at*
 ii 17 *nu* ^{U[R]}^U^ḫ *aššuwa laḥḫ a pāun nu* ^{URU}^ḫ *aššuwan ḥarninkun*
 ii 18 ERIM.MEŠ≈za≈mišš≈a ^{URU}zizzilippi *ēšta*
 ii 19 *nu* ^{URU}zizzilippi *ḫ ūllanḏa]*iš kišat
-
- ii 20 *[m]ān≈apa LUGAL-uš* ^{URU}lawazzantiya *uwanun* ^mlaḥ *ḫ a[š≈mūkūrur²]*⁵⁰
 ii 21 *ēšta* ^{URU}lawazantiyan *waggariyat n≈an* [DINGIR.MEŠ]
 ii 22 *kiššari≈mi dāer ḫ antezziyašš≈a* UGULA ^{LÚ.MEŠ}LĪM ^{md}[... UGULA ^{LÚ.MEŠ}...]
 ii 23 ^mkarruwaš UGULA ^{LÚ.MEŠ}ŠĀ.TAM ^minaraš ^{LÚ.MEŠ}SĪLA.ŠU.DUḪ.A ^mkil[... UGULA ^{LÚ.MEŠ}...]
 ii 24 ^{md}U-mimmaš UGULA ^{LÚ.MEŠ}GIŠGIDRU ^mzinwašeliš *U* ^mlelli[...]
 ii 25 *meggaēš nu* ^mtanūi ^{LÚ}GIŠGIDRU *duddumili pī[ēr]*
-
- ii 26 [LUGA]L[?]-uš⁵¹ UL [... ^mḫ uz]ziyanU [Š]EŠ.MEŠ-ŠU *an[da kuenner²]*⁵²

48. My restoration *kuitki* “any(thing)” follows *GHL* §12.14 n. 52, *contra* Hoffmann (1984, 28), who restores *kuiški* “any(one).” The verb *taggašši* is clearly second-person singular and does not agree with *kuiški* if the latter is the subject. For use of the second-person in a broad prohibitive context, see below, §29 ii 40–45.

49. Hoffmann (1984, 28–29) does not include brackets anywhere in ii 15, suggesting that the entire line is preserved. The end of the line is broken, however; ḪUL-lu is severely abraded and U-UL *i-ya-mi* is in a gap. Hoffmann’s transliteration must be a simple mistake; her translation includes brackets in the appropriate places (“ich aber will ihnen [nicht] Böses [tun]”).

50. This tentative reconstruction follows Hoffmann 1984, 30–31.

51. I tentatively follow Hoffmann 1984, 30 in restoring the first sign as LUGAL, but the traces on KBo III 1 ii 26 do not support this restoration (and the photo on *Konkordanz* is difficult to read here).

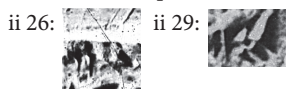
52. This line is of the utmost importance for analyzing the apology, but unfortunately it is severely abraded. After UL, Hoffmann reads š[a-qa-a]ḫ -[ḫ u-]u-ḫ[nu-kán] ^m[ḫ u-]u[z-zi-]i[a-a]n Ū ŠEŠ^{MEŠ}-ŠU an-d[a ku-en-ta], translating “Ich ... w[ußt]e (es) nicht. [Und er tötete Ḫuzziy]a, und seine Brüder da[zu?]” (1984, 30–31). For the same section, Forrer has [...] x [...] -zi-ia-an Ū ŠEŠ.MEŠ-ŠU an-da (BoTU II 42). After collating the line from the photograph on *Konkordanz*, I concur with Forrer’s transliteration (except for the final DA sign, which I cannot detect). I do not see traces of either verb, but of the crucial PN I read [^mḫ u-uz]-‘zi-ya-an’. The ZI is the most clear, as one can see the two vertical wedges and the tops and bottoms of the group of Winkelhakens. Of YA one can make out the two

- ii 27 [m]ān LU[G]AL-uš ištamaššun ^mtanuwan ^mtaḥ urwailin^mtaḥ u[šunn≈a]
- ii 28 [u]water nu≈uš pankuš parā ḥ ingani ḥarta LUGAL-ušš≈a memaḥ ḥ un
- ii 29 [kuwa]t≈war≈e akkanzi nu≈war≈uš IGI.ḪI.A-wa munnanzi nu≈uš
LUGAL-uš kar[šauš[?]]
- ii 30 [LÜ.ME]^šAPIN.LÁ iyanun ^{GIŠ}TUKUL.ḪI.A-uš≈šuš≈(š)ta ZAG.UDU≈za
daḥ ḥ un nu≈šmaš pārdu [(...)]⁵³ peḥ ḥ un
-
- ii 31 nu šalla≈pat ḥ aššannaš ēšḥ ar pangariyattati nūštapar[iy]aš⁵⁴
- ii 32 MUNUS.LUGAL BA.ÚŠ EGIR-pa≈ma uet ^mammunaš DUMU LUGAL
BA.ÚŠ nu šiunan antuḥ šiš≈a
- ii 33 taršikkanzi kāša≈wa ^{URU}ḥ attuši ēšḥ ar pangariyattati
- ii 34 nu ^mtelipinuš ^{URU}ḥ attuši tuliyan ḥ alziḥ ḥ un kitpandalāz⁵⁵ ^{URU}ḥ attuši

lower vertical wedges, and the vertical wedge of AN is also visible. The following section of photograph (from *Konkordanz*) shows -^lzi-ya-an¹ Ū:



One can compare the traces of ZI especially with the same sign in *ak-kán-zi* in ii 29 below.



I would like to thank Andy Kerr for helping me manipulate the photograph of this line. The images are used with the permission of Staatliche Museen zu Berlin—Vorderasiatisches Museum, Fotoarchiv.

I justify my restoration of the verbs as follows: I omit the first verb, Hoffmann's *šaqah ḥ un* "I knew," since it does not appear in the copy in KBo III 1 and Forrer does not preserve it, nor can I read it in the photograph. Hoffmann's reading is feasible and suits the context, but I do not want to weight my analysis too heavily on a word I see no evidence for. The final verb I restore as *kuenner*². Although it is not preserved, in §31 Telipinu refers to the same three men as having committed murder, which suffices to establish the restoration here. I include the ^l only because the singular form *kuenta* is equally likely; it depends on whether one assumes that the subject is Tanuwa alone, or together with Tahurwaili and Taruhsu. The interpretation of this line is significantly helped by a preserved portion of a different, extremely fragmentary, text of Telipinu. The text, preserved on KBo XII 8 iv 25'–26', reads "And Huzziya with his seven companions/brothers (*ATḪŪTIM*) they [kil]led" (for the text see Hoffmann 1984, 63–67; Carruba 1974, 77–78).

53. The end of this line is impossible to discern. The copy of KBo III 1 ii 30 reads *qa/pār-du* [...], but according to Forrer (BoTU II 42 n. 8) the traces suggest ^{GIŠ}BA[LAG] "harp"—which he dismisses in favor of ^{GIŠ}ŠUDUN "yoke," which is not consonant with the traces but makes better sense contextually. For other possibilities, see Hoffmann 1984, 30–31; Carruba 1974, 74–75.

54. The reading of this name is a conflation of the two preserved exemplars, but it privileges KBo VII 15 ii 5' (*iš-ta-pa-r*[i-...]) over KBo III 1 ii 31 (*iš-ta-ar*[...]-aš).

55. The reading of this phrase is a conflation of the two preserved exemplars, but it

- ii 35 *ḫ aššannaš DUMU-an idalu lē kuiški iyazi nu≈šši≈šan GÍR-an takkešzi*
- ii 36 LUGAL-uš≈šan ḫ antezziyaš≈pat DUMU LUGAL DUMU-RU kikkištaru takku DUMU⁵⁶ L[UGAL]
- ii 37 *ḫ antezziš NU.GÁL nu kuiš⁵⁷ tān pēdaš DUMU-RU nu LUGAL-uš apāš*
- ii 38 *kišaru mān DUMU LUGAL≈ma IBILA NU.GÁL nu kuiš DUMU. MUNUS ḫ antezziš*
- ii 39 *nu≈šši≈ššan^{LU} antiyantān appāndu LUGAL-uš apāš kišaru*
- ii 40 URRAM ŠĒRAM kuiš ammu EGIR-anda LUGAL-uš kišari n≈apa ŠEŠ. MEŠ-ŠU
- ii 41 DUMU.MEŠ-ŠU^{LÚ.MEŠ} gaenaš≈šiš^{LÚ.MEŠ} ḫ aššannaš≈šaš U ERIM.MEŠ-ŠU
- ii 42 *taru[p]panteš ašandu nu≈za uwaši^{LU} KÚR-an utnē kuttani[t]*
- ii 43 *taruḫ ḫ an ḫarši kiššann≈a lē tēši arḫ a≈wa parkunummi*
- ii 44 *parkunuši≈ma≈za UL kuit nu≈za anda imma ḫ atkišnuš⁵⁸*
- ii 45 *ḫ aššannaš≈an≈za≈kan lē kuinki kuenti UL SIG₅-in*
- ii 46 *namma kuiš≈a⁵⁹ LUGAL-uš kišari nu ŠEŠ-aš NIN-aš idālu šanaḫ zi*
- ii 47 *šumeš≈a pankuš≈ši<š> nu≈šši karši tetten kī≈wa ēšnaš uttar*
- ii 48 *tuppiaz au karū≈wa ēšḫ ar^{URU} ḫ attuši makkešta*
- ii 49 *nu≈war≈at≈apa DINGIR.MEŠ-iš šallai ḫ aššannai dāer*
- ii 50 *kuiš ŠEŠ.MEŠ-n≈a NIN.MEŠ-n≈a ištarna idālu iyazi nu LUGAL-waš*
- ii 51 *ḫ araššanā šuwāiēzzi nu tuliyan ḫ alzišten mān≈apa uttar≈š[ḫ]paizzi*
- ii 52 *nu SAG.DU-naz šarnikdu duddumili≈ma^mzuruwaš*
- ii 53 *^mdānuwaš^mtaḫ urwailiyaš^mtaḫ uršuš≈a iwar lē [ku]nanzi*
- ii 54 *É-ri≈šši≈šši ANA DAM-ŠU DUMU.MEŠ-ŠU idālu lē takkiššanzi*
- ii 55 *takku DUMU LUGAL≈ma waštai SAG.DU-az≈pat šarnikdu ANA É-ŠU≈ma≈šši≈ššan*
- ii 56 *U ANA DUMU.MEŠ-ŠU idālu lē takkiššanzi DUMU.MEŠ LUGAL≈ma kuedani*
- ii 57 *šer ḫ arkiškantari UL ANA É.MEŠ-ŠUNU A.[Š]À.Ḫ.A-ŠUNU^{GIŠ}KIRI₆. GEŠTIN.ḪI.A-ŠUNU*

privileges KBo VII 15 ii 9' (*ki-it-pa-an-da-l[a-...]*) over KBo III 1 ii 34 (*ki-it-pa-da-la-az*). Here and elsewhere I read *kitpandalaz* as one word; see the remarks in Beckman 1986b, 571.

56. The copy has a vertical wedge on the right side of the DUMU sign; it looks like AD L[UGAL]. This must be a scribal error, however.

57. Reading *ku-iš* with KBo XII 4 ii' 6' over the erroneous GIŠ-iš of KBo III 1 ii 37. The difference between KU and GIŠ is only one horizontal wedge.

58. For explanation of *ḫ atkišnuš* see COS 1.76:197 n. 51.

59. This is clearly the generalizing relative “whoever” and not the distributive “everyone”; see *GHL* §8.4.

- ii 58 ÌR.MEŠ-ŠUNU⁶⁰ SAG.GÉME.ÌR.MEŠ-ŠUNU GU₄.ĪI.A-ŠUNU UDU.
 ĪI.A-ŠUNU
-
- ii 59 *kinuna mān DUMU LUGAL kuiški waštai nu SAG.DU-az≈pat šarnik[d]u*
 ii 60 É-SU≈ma≈šši DUMU-ŠU≈ya idālu lē taggašteni piyanna'≈ma⁶¹ ŠA
 DUMU.MEŠ LUGAL
- ii 61 *ezzan GIŠ-ru⁶² UL āra kī≈ma idālauwa uddār kuiēš ēššanzi*
 ii 62 LÚ.MEŠ[GAL-TIM LÚ.MEŠ]ABU BĪTUM⁶³ GAL DUMU.MEŠ É.GAL GAL
 MEŠEDI GAL GEŠTIN≈ya
- ii 63 [...] É.MEŠ LUGAL *danna ilaliyanzi⁶⁴ nu kiššan [ta]ranzi[i]*
 ii 64 *aši≈man≈wa URU-aš [a]mmel kišari nu≈ššan ANA EN URU-LIM idālu*
 ii 65 *takkiškezzi*
-
- ii 66 *kinuna kezza UD-az^{URU} ħ attuš⁶⁵ DUMU.MEŠ É.GAL LÚ.MEŠ MEŠEDI*
 L[Ú].MEŠKUŠ₇[G]UŠKIN
- ii 67 LÚ.MEŠSĪLA.ŠU.DUĪA LÚ.MEŠGIŠ[BANŠUR] LÚ.MEŠMUḪALDIM LÚ.MEŠ
 GIŠ!GIDRU⁶⁶ LÚ.MEŠšalašĥ iēš⁶⁷
- ii 68 LÚ.MEŠUGULA LĪ[M Š ĒRI]⁶⁸ kī uttar šumāš EGIR-an šekten
 ^mtanuwaš≈ma

60. This is a conflation of the two preserved exemplars, privileging the better preserved ÌR.MEŠ-ŠU-N[U] of KUB XI 6 ii' 4' over [AR-D]I.ĪI.A-ŠU-NU of KBo III 1 ii 58.

61. KBo III 1 ii 60 reads *pī-ya-ni-ma*, which seems to be a mistake. This could be a simplified writing of *piyanni*, a dative-locative form of *piyatar* “giving,” but one would expect the scribe to express the doubled /n/. Following CHD P: 252 sub *piyatar*, I treat this an error for *piyanna*, the infinitive of *piya*- “give.”

62. For this expression, see my note to the appearance of the same word pair in Hattusili's Autobiography (§4.2.1 iv 83).

63. Although this is a plural phrase, I render *ABU* in the (Akkadian) singular, instead of *ABŪ*, because they are clearly not employing Akkadian grammar. The following *BĪTUM* (written *BI-TUM*) is in the nominative instead of the genitive. Moreover, the expression *ABU BĪTU(M)* appears again below in ii 70 as a singular noun.

64. KBo III 1 ii 63 erroneously reads *i-da-la-li-ya-an-zi*, a nonsensical form that likely resulted from the repetition of *i-da-a-lu* in this text. The correct *ilaliyanzi* is indicated by KUB XI 6 ii' 10', which preserves *i-la-l[i-...]*.

65. KUB XI 6 ii' 13' has ^{URU}pa-[...] here.

66. The signs on KBo III 1 ii 67 are PA GIDRU, presumably either a scribal or modern copying error since PA and GIŠ closely resemble each other.

67. Reading LÚ.MEŠša-la-aš-hi-e-eš with KUB XI 2 line 4' over LÚ.MEŠša-la-aš-ĥ i-ya-aš with KBo III 1 ii 67, though the latter is acceptable also.

68. Hoffmann (1984, 36) indicates that *LI-IM Š E-RI* is preserved, though she does not specify on which exemplar. I cannot locate it on any of the preserved exemplars; see Beckman 1986b, 571.

- ii 69 ^mtaḥ urwail[š] ^mtaruḥ šušš≈a INA PANI≈KUNU GIŠKIM-iš ēšd[u]
 ii 70 [m]ān namma idalu k[u]iški iyazi naššu ^{LÜ}ABU BĪTUM⁶⁹
 ii 71 našma GAL DUMU.MEŠ [É].GAL-[L]IM⁷⁰ GAL MEŠEDI GAL
^{LÜ.MEŠ}UGULA LĪM Š ĒRI
 ii 72 mān≈aš EGIR-ez[zi]š ḥ antezziš⁷¹ šumašš≈a pankuš anda
 ii 73 ē[p]ten nu≈šmaš≈an ^{UZU}ZU₉-it karipten⁷²
-
- iii 1' ^{URU}ḥ attušī≈ma^{LÜ.MEŠ}GAL-TIM ^{LÜ.MEŠ}ABU É-TIM GAL DUMU.MEŠ⁷³
 É.GAL GAL GEŠTIN
 iii 2' [GAL ^{LÜ.MEŠ}M[EŠEDI] GAL ^{LÜ.MEŠ}KUŠ₇ UGULA [^{LÜ}].MEŠNIMGIR.
 ERIM.M[EŠ ... pa]rmi⁷⁴ kuēš šalla[ēš]
 iii 3' [...]anda appezziš⁷⁵≈uš≈za⁷⁵ daškandu
-
- iii 4' [(...) ^{URU}ḥ aṭtušī≈ma uedanteš URU.DIDLI.ḪI.A paḥ ḥ ašnuwant[š]
 iii 5' [ašandu nu]≈uš lē tarnatti uedanteš URU.DIDLI.ḪI.A [(...)]
 iii 6' [... w]ātar ḥ alkiya≈ma≈at 10-iš20-iš naeš[ḥ ut...]
-
- iii 7' [... ^mte]lipinu[...] LUGAL GAL IN[A ..]
 iii 8' [...] ti ši [...]
 iii 9' [...]
 iii 10' [...]
 iii 11' [...] ḥ a x [...] ⁶
 iii 12' [...] x ḥ a [...]
 iii 13' [...]
 iii 14' [...]
 iii 15' [...] x ti [...]
 iii 16' [...] nu≈u[š ...]
-

69. Reading *BI-TUM* with KUB XI 2 line 9' over *BI-TÛ* with KBo III 1 ii 70 and KBo XII 4 iii' 3'.

70. For this reading, as opposed to [É.(GAL) GAL.G]EŠTIN in Hoffmann 1984, 38; see Beckman 1986b, 571.

71. Reading *ḥ a-an-te-ez-zi-iš* with KUB XI 2 line 11' over [...] -zi with KBo III 1 ii 72.

72. Reading *ka-ri-ip-tén* with KBo XII 4 iii' 6' (also [...] -r) *i-ip-tén* with KBo XIX 97 line 4') over *ka-x-ip-tén* with KBo III 1 ii 73, where x does not resemble RI.

73. This is a conflation of the two preserved exemplars, privileging *A-BU* [...] G]AL DUMU. MEŠ of KBo XII 4 iii' 7' over [...] -BU É-TIM GAL ^{LÜ}[...] with KBo XII 6 line 4'.

74. This reading works well with the traces, but *pēr* "house(hold)" is consistently written logographically (É) in all exemplars of this text, so I treat the reading as uncertain.

75. KBo XII 4 iii' 9' reads *ap-pé-ez-zi-<iš>-šu-uš* [...] (ZA is preserved in IBoT 84 line 17').

76. These abraded, but legible, traces in iii 11'–12' are indicated by the copy in KBo III 68; cf. also BoTU II 44.

- iii 17' [... UR]U.DIDLI.ĤI.A ŠA É.MEŠ [N]^{A4}KI[ŠIB⁷⁷ ...]
 iii 18' [...]muḥ aš^{URU}ḥ arkiyaš^{URU}[...]
 iii 19' [...] ^{URU}zelmuttaš ^{URU}tappašpaš [...]
 iii 20' [...]ukziyaš ^{URU}ašurnaš ^{URU}ānzara[...]
 iii 21' [...] ^{URU}šamuḥ aš^{URU}marištaš ^{URU}ku[...]
 iii 22' [...] ^{URU}ḥ]urmaš^{URU}wargaššaš ^U[^{RU}...]
 iii 23' [...]aššašš[aš ^U]^{RU}šalittaš ^U[^{RU}...]
 iii 24' [...] ^{URU}šamluššaš [^U]^{RU}gūlpinaš ^{URU}š[ar...]
 iii 25' [...]m]aš ^{URU}pīšaš ^{URU}pawazziyaš ^U[^{RU}...]
 iii 26' [...]riyaš ^{URU}šienzanaš ^{URU}waštiš[...]^Unuandaš
 iii 27' [...]i]ššaš ^{URU}kuwašariyaš ^{URU}uīn[...]^Uaš
 iii 28' [...]aš ^{URU}ikkuwaniyaš ^{URU}ḥ urniyaš^U[^{RU}...]
 iii 29' ^{URU}ḥ adawax-aš ^{URU}ḥ uruttaš^{URU}terumnaš ^{URU}n[a...]
 iii 30' ^{URU}ulašš[aš] ^{URU}parminiyaš ^{URU}paršuḥ andaš^{URU}ḤUR.SAG-aš [(...)]
 iii 31' ^{URU}walin[ašš]aš ^{URU}iyammaš ^{URU}wašuwattaš ^{UR}[^U...]
 iii 32' ^{URU}šuplandaš ^{ID}ḥ ūlayašš≈a ŠU.NÍGIN⁷⁸ 1 ŠŪŠ[^I ...]
 iii 33' [... É.MEŠ] ^{NA4}KIŠIB
-
- iii 34' [...]ḥ ašš[aš]
 iii 35' [...]anta[...]
 iii 36' [...]yaš
 iii 37' [^{UR}]^Ukuwanna[š ...]
 iii 38' ^{URU}lah ṽramaš^{URU}ḥ a[...]^{URU}ḥ araḥaraš
 iii 39' ^{URU}mallita[...]^{URU}ḥ aršuwaš^{URU}tipalaš
 iii 40' ^{URU}kurša[n...]^{URU}šuwanzuwannaš ^{URU}tamlutaš
 iii 41' ^{URU}pikumi[...]⁷⁹ ^{URU}x⁸⁰-mašḥ unaš[^{URU}]ših arnaš^{URU}ḥ alippaššuwaš
 iii 42' ^{URU}kalašummiyaš ^{URU}ḥ ūlar[taš] ŠU.NÍGIN 34 URU.DIDLI.ĤI.A É
^{NA4}KIŠIB imiul[aš]
-

77. For the expression É.(MEŠ) ^{NA4}KIŠIB (= *per šiyannaš*; Akk. *bīt[ū] kunukki*; lit. “house[s] of the seal”) meaning “storehouse,” see Singer 1984 (esp. pp. 103–5 for Telipinu); see also the brief note in CHD P: 285 sub *per* 3.c. The ^{LU}AGRIG “administrator” (iii 50') is clearly the manager of the storehouse.

78. Here and later in the line ŠU is written with a second vertical wedge on the right side.

79. This is a conflation of the two preserved exemplars, privileging ^{URU}*pī-ku*-[...] with KUB XI 1 iii 5' over ^{URU}*zi'-ku-mi*-[...] with KBo III 1 iii 41'.

80. Hoffmann (1984, 44) reads x as DAM; the traces on KUB XXXI 2 line 5' suggest TE.

- iii 43⁸¹ *nu≈ššan ḫ alki*ḪI.A-uš⁸² EGIR-an *maknunun* [...] ^{LÜ.MEŠ}APIN.LÁ
 iii 44' ^{A.ŠĀ}A.GĀR.ḪI.A⁸³ *apē≈pat te* [...] š]iēššandu
 iii 45' *apē≈pat utniyanza wa[r...]* maršatar ēššanzi
 iii 46' *nu≈ššan ilašni parā naššu 1 gipeššar našma 2 gipeššar*
 iii 47' *ḫ aminkiške*⁸⁴ n≈ašta utnē ēšḫ ar akkušker
 iii 48' *kinuna namma*⁸⁵ lē ēššanzi kuiš≈at iyazi 4*nu≈šši* ḪUL-lu ḫ inḫan
*piandu*⁸⁶

 iii 49⁸⁷ URRAM ŠĒRAM *kuiš amme*⁸⁸ EGIR-an LUGAL-uš kiš[ar]i nu ḫ alḫius]
 iii 50' ŠUM-a≈šmi⁸⁹ šīeše kāšma≈du≈za ^{LÜ.MEŠ}AGRIG É [N]^A4KIŠIB

81. KUB III 89 iv' 2'–4' provides a fragment of an Akkadian version of this paragraph that matches perfectly with the Hittite: [...] x *mātim dām*[... / ... m]amma lā ē[ppušū' ... / ... m]ūtāna lā [...] "[...] ... of the land, blood [...] an]yone not w[ork ... pes]tilence not [...]"

82. The first two words of this line follow KUB XI 1 iii 8' (*nu-uš-ša-an ḫ al-ki*.ḪI.A-uš), which is the only perfectly preserved exemplar here. It agrees exactly with KUB XXXI 2 line 8' (*nu-uš-ša-an ḫ al*[...]) and closely with KBo III 67 iii 1' (*nu-uš-ša-an ḫ al-ki-u*[š]). The master exemplar, KBo III 1 iii 43', reads slightly differently (*nu-kán ḫ al*[...]-uš).

83. Reading the determinative A.ŠĀ with KUB XI 1 iii 9', KUB XXXI 2 line 9', and KBo III 67 iii 2'. KBo III 1 iii 44' is heavily abraded here, but the signs resemble ME EŠ.

84. Reading *ḫ ā-mi-in-ki-iš-ke-er* with Hoffmann (1984, 46); the first sign resembles KIŠ.

85. Reading *namma* with KUB XI 1 iii 14'; KBo III 1 iii 48' omits this word.

86. KBo III 1 iii 48' preserves only the left sign of *-kán* and omits *pí-an-du* entirely; so it also appears in Hoffmann 1984, 46–47. Forrer (BoTU II 45) indicates that it is almost fully preserved, however, reading *ḫ i-in-gan bi*[-a]n-du.

87. As with the previous paragraph, the Akkadian of KBo III 89 iv' 5'–10' is fragmentary, but the few clear portions match well with the Hittite: [...] na *warkiya* [...] / [...] *tikama lū* [...] / [...] *bīt* ^{NA4}*kunukki uššar* [...] / [...] mi u [še]ʾa qar [...] / [...] / [...] "[...] ... after me [...] / [...] ... you and [...] / [...] storehouse will neglect [...] / [...] ... and [gra]in ... [...]" / [...] / [...]"

88. KUB XI 5 rev. 1' has [am]-mu-uk here for am-me-el.

89. This form poses two difficulties for interpretation. First, one expects a second-person singular possessive pronoun “your” to agree with the second-person singular verb. The possessive pronoun is plural, however—either second or third person. Some commentators therefore see this as an address to all future kings, with the lack of agreement between verb and possessive pronoun being a simple mistake (COS 1.76:198; HST 107, 233); others treat the possessive pronoun as a reference to “the treacherous AGRIGS” (CHD Š/1, 16 sub *šāi*- B, *šīye*- 1.b; see also Hoffmann 1984, 47). I follow the former course. The second problem is the nominal form. One expects the underlying form to be the instrumental *lamnit*, which is apparently excluded by the phonetic complement *-a*. CHD, therefore, treats the form as an accusative (of respect?), with the final /n/ of the underlying *laman* assimilated into the possessive pronoun (Š/1, 16 sub *šāi*- B, *šīye*- 1.b). Although this works well morphologically, reading an accusative here makes little sense. I suggest that this form might be the result of dictation. Weeden has recently shown that logograms (both Sumerograms and

	[d]āliyanzi
iii 51'	nu≈tta kiššan daranzi [...]ik
iii 52'	nu≈wa≈at≈ma≈za ⁹⁰ lē šiya[...]eške
iii 53'	nu≈tta≈kkan kāšma karpan[zi (...)]
iii 54'	[...] UL ḫ uiš[...]
iii 55' ⁹¹	{[...]ka [...] bītu la [...]}
iii 56'	{[...] bīt ^N A ₄ kunukki ^{lú.meš} abarakkū [...]}
iii 57'	{[...] še'a ½ pa še'a uma[...] ^{lú.m} es[abar]akkū [...]}
iii 58'	{[...] lū imt[a...]}
iii 59'	{[...] ^{lú.meš} ḫ a[...]}
iii 60'	{[...] a uma[d... um]addūm[a ⁹² (...)] / [...] imtā[...]}
iii 61'	[...]ti
iii 62'	[...w]an
iii 63'	[...]
iii 64'	[...]
iii 65'	[...]tar
iii 66'	[...]
iii 67'	[...]
iii 68'	[... t]īēr [...]
iii 69'	[kuiš kitp]andalaz am[mel EGIR-an LUGAL-uš kišari] ⁹³
iii 70'	[...]randa tepša[...]

Akkadograms) were sometimes dictated phonetically to Hittite scribes, instead of having the Hittite universally pronounced, as has long been assumed (2011, 333–36). If this is the case here, the scribes could have been reading the Akkadian *ŠUM* for “name” instead of any form of Hittite *laman*; the following /a/ would simply be a graphic vowel (cf. *GHL* §1.11). All aspects of my interpretation of this word are tentative.

90. Reading -za with KUB XI 5 rev. 4'; the traces on KBo III 1 iii 52' suggest [...-a]z.

91. Only four signs are preserved on KBo III 1, the one extant exemplar of this paragraph (-*ki-ši* at the end of iii 57' and *kat-ta* at the end of iii 59'). The number of lines and the horizontal line marking the paragraph break are preserved, however, on the right side of the tablet. Because the Hittite version of this paragraph is almost entirely gone, I have included the Akkadian version (KUB III 89 iv' 11'–17') above—it too is fragmentary, but a few words are recognizable.

92. In light of *maknunun* “I multiplied” in iii 43' above, I take this as a D stem of *mādu* “multiply.” This is an admittedly problematic interpretation, however, since *mādu* is attested in the G, Š, and N stems, but not in the D. This is a speculative interpretation, though it is well within the semantic range of the Akkadian verb.

93. This restoration follows Hoffmann (1984, 48) and derives from elsewhere in the text, especially iii 49'.

- iii 71' [...] *kiššan tezzi* [...]
 iii 72' *zigg≈a lē ištamašti* [...]
 iii 73' *nu≈za mān NAM.RA-an tūriya* [...]
 iii 74' *n≈apa* ^{GIŠ}TUKUL.ĤI.A *šarninkiške ERIM.[MEŠ ...]*
 iii 75' *n≈an naššu ANA DA[M]-KA našm[a ...]*
-
- iv 1'–8' [...] ⁹⁴
 iv 9' [...] *a e iēnzi* [...]
 iv 10' [...] ^{NINDA}*hālin U[L ...]*
 iv 11' [...] *i apē≈ma≈at KAŠ GEŠTIN ta* [...]
 iv 12' [...] *mātta ēššanzi nu a* [...]
 iv 13' [...] *kinuna kitpantalaz* [...]
 iv 14' ⁴*GÍR-an āppan kuttani≈šš[i (...)]*
-
- iv 15' [...] *āi pappi* ⁹⁵ *naḥ ḥ anteš ešer nu mān ABU*
 iv 16' [...] *eššarra n≈ašta iššaz [Z]I kuiš ka* [...]
 iv 17' [...] *attaš annaš akkanzi nu ATHŪ EZEN₄* [...] ⁹⁶
 iv 18' [...] *x ḥ urtaišaz zaḥ ḥ ait natta* [...]
 iv 19' [...] *g* *alankanteš ešer kuit≈za iēnzi ma* [...]
 iv 20' [...] *aš kikkištari*
-
- iv 21' [*m*]*ān [appez]ziann≈a dandukišnaš karpinattiš* ⁹⁶ [(...)]
 iv 22' [...] *ni šarr[iy]auwan dāer n≈e āi pappi UL [naḥ ḥ anteš ešer*
 iv 23' *n≈e apad[da] šiuniyaḥ ḥ aḥ kinuna kitpand[alaz ...]*
 iv 24' *mān* ⁹⁸ *attiš TI-išwanteš šarrana* [...]

94. An indeterminate amount of text is missing here, constituting the entirely lost §45. Forrer's suggestion of eight missing lines (BoTU II 48) was followed by later scholars; I too follow this line numbering for the sake of consistency. Also following other scholars, when the text resumes I proceed with §46 although there is no preserved paragraph marker in the text—only the bottom part of iv 9' (= KUB XI 1 iv' 1') is preserved; we have no idea how many, if any, paragraph markers were in the preceding lines.

95. For this word, I follow the hesitant explanation in *CHD* P: 101 sub *pappi*- A.

96. Thus far, *karpina*-(*a*)*ttiš* has defied explanation. Hoffmann interprets it as two words, *karpina attiš* “die Wut (gegen) die Väter” (1984, 52–53). This takes the first part as a form of *karp*- “resentment, anger,” followed by a dative-locative form of *atta*- “father.” Although the connection to “father” seems reasonable given the following lines, the expected dative-locative form is *atti*; the form *attiš* is only attested as the nominative plural. Additionally, as Hoffmann herself notes, there is no space between *karpina* and *attiš* on the text, suggesting one word. From context, “greed” suggests itself, which could develop from the stem *karp*-. I offer this interpretation with hesitation, however, since the term is hapax.

97. The form *šiuniyaḥ ḥ atās* the medio-passive preterite third-person singular, but the subject (*e*) is clearly plural.

98. Reading *ma-a-an* with KBo III 67 iv 3' over [*ma*]-*a-na-aš* with KUB XI 1 iv' 16'; unlike

iv 25'	[kuw]atqa ueriezzi kuit≈ašta ⁹⁹ šarran[na K]A×U-az ueriezzi
iv 26'	n≈ašta Ê-erza parā peššiyandu n≈aš≈kan šarranaza≈pat šamendu
iv 27'	išḫ anašš≈d ¹⁰⁰ uttar kiššan kuiš ēšḫ ar iēzzi nu kuit ēšḫ anaš≈pat
iv 28'	išḫ āš tezzi takku tezzi aku≈war≈aš n≈aš aku takku tezzi≈ma
iv 29'	šarnikdu≈wa ¹⁰¹ nu šarnikdu LUGAL-i≈ma≈apa lē kuitki
iv 30'	^{URU} ḫ attuši alwanzannaš n≈ašta uttār parkunuškatten
iv 31'	kuiš≈za ḫ aššanna ¹⁰² ištarna alwanzatar šakki šumēš ¹ ≈an ¹⁰³
iv 32'	[ḫ] aššannaz ēpten n≈an ANA KÁ Ê.GAL-LIM ¹⁰⁴ uwatetten
iv 33'	kuiš≈an UL≈ma uwatezzi nu uezzi
iv 34'	apēdani≈pat UN-ši Ê-ri≈šši≈pat ¹⁰⁵ idalauēšzi
iv 35'	DUB 1 ^{KAM}
iv 36'	ŠA ^m telipinu QATI

§1 i 1–4) [Thus] Tabarna Telip[i]nu, great king: [Form]erly, Labarna was the great king and his [son]s, his [brother]s and his in-laws, his blood relatives, and his troops were gathered.

§2 i 5–6) The land was small, but wherever he would go on campaign he held the enemy land subject by his vigor.

§3 i 7–9) He destroyed lands, and he divested the lands of (their) might, and he made the sea the border (of his empire) (lit. “he made them the borders of the sea”). When he would return from campaign, each of his sons would go to some land—

§4 i 10–12) The cities Hūpisna, Tūwanuwa, Nenassa, Lānda, Zallara, Parsuhanta, (and) Lūsna—the(se) lands they administered and the great cities were associated.

other interpreters I take *attiš* TI-*išwanteš* as the subject of this line, though it is far from clear. For another interpretation of iv 24'–26', cf. CHD Š/2, 232 sub *šarra*- D 1.a.1'.

99. This is a conflation of the two preserved exemplars, privileging [...] *aš-ta* with KBo XII 7 line 2' over *ku-i-ta-aš-ša* with KUB XI 1 iv' 17'.

100. Reading *iš-ḫ a-na-aš-šaw* with KBo III 67 iv 7' over *iš-ḫ a-na-aš-taw* with KUB XI 1 iv' 19'.

101. Reading *šar-ni-ik-du-wa* with KUB XI 1 iv' 21' (cf. also [...] *-w)a* with KBo XII 7 line 6') over *šar-ni-ik-du* with KBo III 67 iv 9'.

102. Reading the allative form *ḫ a-aš-ša-an-na* with KBo III 67 iv 11' over the archaic genitive plural *ḫ a-aš-ša-an-na-an* of KUB XI 1 iv' 23'.

103. KUB XI 1 iv' 23' reads *šu-me-e-ta-an*; the TA sign must be an error for ŠA.

104. Following KBo XII 7 line 9'; KUB XI 1 iv' 24' omits *-LIM*.

105. This reading follows KBo III 67 iv 14'; KUB XI 1 iv' 26' reads [...] UN]-*ši-pát i-da-la-u-e-eš-zi*.

§5 i 13–16) Afterward Hattusili (I) ruled. His sons, his brothers, his in-laws and his blood relatives, and his troops also were g[a]thered. But wherever he would go on campaign, that one, too, held the enemy land subject by his vigor.

§6 i 17–20) He destroyed lands, and he divested the lands of (their) might, and he made the sea the border (of his empire) (lit. “he made them the borders of the sea”). When he would return from [ca]mpaign, each of his sons would go to some la[n]d—in his hand, too, the great cities were associated.

§7 i 21–23) But when, later on, serv[ant]s of the sons of the king [be]came corrupt and started to consume their households, and they started to conspire against their lords, they began to shed their (text: “our”) blood.

§8 i 24–27) When Mursili (I) [rul]ed in Hattusa, his sons, his brothers, his in-laws, his blo[od r]elatives, and his troops also were gathered. And he held the enemy land subject by his vigor, [and] he made the [se]a the border (of his empire) (lit. “he made them the borders of the sea”).

§9 i 28–31a) [And h]e went to Aleppo, and he destroyed Aleppo. The captives of Aleppo (and) its goods he brought to Hattusa. Afterward he went to Babylon, and he [d]estroyed Babylon, and he struck down the [H]urrian [troops. And] the capti[ve]s of Babylon (and) its goods he held [in H]a[ttusa].

§10 i 31b–32a) [Now] Hantili[i] was butler,¹⁰⁶ and he had Ha[rapsi]li, sister of Mursili, as (his) wife.

§11 i 32b–34) [And Zi]danta connived [wi]th Hantili, and [they did] an evil th[ing]—they ki[ll]ed Mursili, and they shed his blood.

§12 i 35–38) [Han]tili took fright [and] ... [...]s pro[te]ct[ed] him. [...] Wherever he would go, the land ... [...] the cities [...]ta, [...]ya, Hurpana, Carchem[ish ...] they began to [...] And the troops [...]

§13 i 39–42) And [when Ha]ntili arr[iv]ed at the city Tagarama, [he began to sa]y, “[Wh]at is this that I have done? [Why did I lis]ten to Zidan[ta? ...] the gods sough[t] (vengeance for) the blood of Mursili.

§14 i 43–46) [...] the H]urrian [troops] (who were like) foxes hunted [in the] b[ushes] they [cal]led. [...] t]o [the land] Hatti he came. [...] ... [...] the la]nd was overtur[ned ...] they called ... [...]

§15 i 47'–52') [...] the Hurrians from my land they drove out. [...] with his sons in the city Sugazziya [...] Harap]sili, the queen, beca[me] ill, and [...] Ilaliūmma, pa[lace] attendant (lit. “son of the palace”), after him [...] the men of the house of the city [Sugaz]ziya [...] ... cul[t]ivat[ed ...] ... [...] ...

§16 i 53'–57') [...] the queen of the city [Sukziy]a [...] b]egan to di[e ... Ilali]u[m]a [s]ecretly se[nt] palace attendant[s, and ...] ... saying, “Let the queen

106. Here and elsewhere “butler” does not signify a low-echelon server but a high-ranking official. This is similar to the “chief cupbearer,” *rab-šāqê* (רב־שָׁקֵה), of 2 Kgs 18:17//Isa 36:12 and numerous Assyrian sources; see Mattila 2000, 45–60, 155, 163.

of the city Sukziya die!” So they seized him/her together with his/her sons [...] they [kil]led.

§17 i 58'–62') When Hantili inquired about the queen of the city Suk[ziya and her sons], saying, “Who ki[lled (...)] them?,” the chief of the palace attendants sent (him) a report. And [the fam]ily [...] they gathered and them [...] the city Taga[rama] and they hunted them in the bushes, and they [...]

§18 i 63'–65') And when Hantili [became] ol[d], and he began to become a god, then Zidanta killed [Piseni] son of Hantili together with his sons; he killed [also] his first-ran[k] servants.

§19 i 66'–68') And Zidanta ruled. And the gods sought (vengeance for) the blood of Piseni, so the gods made Ammuna, (his) kin, (into) his enemy. Then he killed his father Zidanta.

§20 i 69'–71') And Ammuna ruled. And the gods sought (vengeance for) the blood of his father, Zidanta, and into his hand the barley, wine, oxen, (and) sheep [they did] no[t ...] in (his) hand.

§21 ii 1–7) The land became hostile to him—the cities [...]ag[g]a, [...]la, Galmiya, Adaniy[a], Arzamiya, Sallapa, Parduwata, and Ahhula. And wherever he would go to (his) troops on campaign, they would not come back victoriously (lit. “well”). And when Ammuna became a god, Zurū, chief of the bodyguard, in those same days secretly sent (one) of his blood relatives—his son, Tahirwaili, man of the golden spear—and he killed the family of Tittiya together with his sons.

§22 ii 8–12) And he sent Taruhsu, a messenger, and he ki[lled] Hantili together with his sons. (Then) Huzziya ruled. And Telipinu had Is[t]apariya as his first-rank wife. When Huzziya (wanted to)¹⁰⁷ kill them, the matter became known and Telipinu drove them¹⁰⁸ away.

§23 ii 13–15) He (had) five br[ot]hers, and he constructed houses for them, saying, “Let them go! Let them live! And let them feast (and) drink! You shall not do a[ny] evil to them. And I proclaim, “Those did evil to me, but I [will not do evil] to them.”

§24 ii 16–19) When (I), Telipinu, had sat on the throne of my father, I then went on campaign to the c[i]ty Hassuwa, and I destroyed the city Hassuwa. And my troops were in the city Zizzilippi, and at the city Zizzilippi a battle broke out.

107. Lit. “When Huzziya killed them.” Since Telipinu and Istapariya obviously live on and serve as the heroes of this text, this must represent a desired act rather than a completed act. The construction is strange, however, since nothing about the verb suggests a modal usage. Van den Hout translates, “When Huzziya wanted to kill them ...” (*COS* 1.76:196); Goedegebuure translates “Huzziya would have killed them ...” (*HST* 107, 231).

108. “Them” presumably refers to Taruhsu and Huzziya, the two homicidally inclined characters in this section, but the text is not explicit. Alternatively, Hoffner interprets “them” as referring to Huzziya and his five brothers (who enter the narrative in the following paragraph), all of whom may have been in cahoots (1975, 53). One might expect “him,” referring to Huzziya alone.

§25 ii 20–25) When, at that time, I came (as) king to the city Lawazzantiya, Lahha was [hostile to me]; he caused the city Lawazzantiya to rebel. (Then) [the gods] gave him into my hand. And of the first rank: the overseer of the leaders of one thousand, [..., the overseer of ...], Karruwa, the overseer of stewards, Inara, the overseer of butlers, Kil[... the overseer of ...], Tarhumimma, the overseer of heralds,¹⁰⁹ Zinwaseli and Lelli[...—(there were) many. And [they] sen[t] secretly to Tanuwa, the herald.

§26 ii 26–30) (I), the king, did not [... Huz]ziya and his [br]others [*they killed*. W]hen I, the king, heard, they [br]ought Tanuwa, Tahurwaili, [and] Taruh[su], and the assembly sentenced them to death. But I, the king, said, “[Wh]y should they die? They will not pursue the matter.”¹¹⁰ And I, the king, made them into farmers and I took their weapons from (their) shoulder(s) and I gave them *yokes*.

§27 ii 31–35) So the blood of the royal (lit. “great”) family spread. And Istapar[iy]a, the queen, died. Afterward, it happened that Ammuna, son of the king, died. Then the “*men of the gods*” were saying, “Behold, blood has spread in Hattusa.” So I, Telipinu, called a meeting.¹¹¹ Hereafter, let no one do evil to a son of the family in Hattusa, and (let no one) draw a dagger against him.

§28 ii 36–39) A son of the first rank only—let (that) son become king. If there is no first-rank son of the k[ing], then a son who is of the second tier—let that one become king. When there is no male child of the king, then she who is a first-rank daughter—let them take a bridegroom for her (and) let that one become king.

§29 ii 40–45) In the future, he who will become king after me—let his brothers, his sons, his in-laws, his blood relatives and his troops be gat[h]ered. And you will come (and) you will hold the enemy land subject by (your) vigo[r]. But do not speak thus: “I will cleanse (it).” You will cleanse nothing, and you also will become involved (lit. “you will trouble yourself”). Do not kill anyone (who is) a blood relative—it is not good.

§30 ii 46–49) Moreover, whoever should become king and seeks evil against brother (or) sister—you¹¹² are his assembly. You must say to him without inhibition, “This is a matter of blood! Look at the tablet! Formerly bloodshed became rampant in Hattusa, and the gods returned it upon the royal (lit. ‘great’) family.”

109. The translation “heralds” follows *HZL*: 335; the expression is literally “people of the staff.”

110. Lit. “They will hide (their) eyes”; see the discussion in Hoffmann 1984, 120–22. The editors of *CHD* treat “hide (their) eyes” as a metaphor for killing them, and take this phrase as appositional to Telipinu’s first question: “Why should they (the plotters) die? ... and (why) should one ‘hide their eyes’” (L–N: 331 sub *munnai*-a.3’.b’).

111. As the edict opens here, the perspective is ambiguous. I interpret the following as being addressed to the readers of the text. For a discussion of the audience(s) of the text see §3.4 below.

112. The pronoun here is second-person plural.

§31 ii 50–58) (If) someone does evil among (his) brothers or sisters and looks toward the head of the king,¹¹³ then call a meeting. If he is found guilty (lit. “if h[is] affair goes”),¹¹⁴ let him pay with (his) head. But secretly—in the manner of Zurū, Dānu (Tanuwa), Tahurwaili, and Taruhsu—they should not [ki]ll. Against his household, against his wife, his sons, they should not concoct evil. If a son of the king sins, then let him pay with (his) head. But against his household and against his sons they should not concoct evil. The reason for which the sons of the king die (does) not (concern) their households, their f[ie]lds, their vineyards, their male servants, their female servants, their oxen, (or) their sheep.

§32 ii 59–65) Now, if some prince sins, let him pay with (his) head only, but you shall not concoct evil against his household or his son—the giving of anything (lit. “straw (or) splinter”) of the sons of the kings is not appropriate. And these evil deeds, those who do them—the [overseer]s, the household heads, the chief of the palace attendants, the chief of the bodyguard, and the chief of the wine—[...] they want to take the royal estates and the[y sp]eak thus: “O, that that city were mine!” Then he commits evil against the ruler of the city.

§33 ii 66–73) Now, from this day forward, in Hattusa—you,¹¹⁵ the palace attendants, bodyguards, “[g]olden knights,” butlers, [waiter]s (lit. “people of the table”), cooks, heralds, stablemen, overseers of the “th[ousand of the battlefield],” remember this word. Let Tanuwa, Tahurwaili, and Taruhsu be a warning before you. [I]f s[o]meone does further evil, either the household head, or the chief of the [palace] attendants, [the chief of the wi]ne, the chief of the bodyguard, the chief of the overseers of the “thousand of the battlefield”—whether he be of low ra[n]k (or) high rank—also you, assembly, s[ei]ze (him) and consume him with (your) teeth!

§34 iii 1’–3’) And in Hattusa, let them take the chiefs—the household heads, the chief of the palace attendants, the chief of wine, [the chief of the] bo[d]yguard, the chief of the knights, the overseer of the troop runners [...] those who are eleva[ted] in [the hous]e [...] ... their subordinates.

§35 iii 4’–6’) [...] And in [Hat]tusa, the fortified cities [must] be protected. Do not neglect them! The fortified cities [... w]ater, and divert it to the grain ten or twenty times ... [...]

§36 iii 7’–16’) [...] Te]lipinu [...] great king in [...] ... [...] ... [...] ... [...] ... and them [...]

113. With van den Hout (COS 1.76:197), I interpret this to mean that “someone ... looks toward the head of the king” with the intent of eliminating the king and seizing the throne; that is, this paragraph deals with potential usurpers. For an alternative interpretation, see Hoffner 1982.

114. I follow *CHD* (P: 40 sub *pai*- A 5.h) in my interpretation of this phrase. For a slightly different interpretation, cf. COS 1.76:197 n. 55.

115. Here and throughout this paragraph, “you” indicates the second-person plural.

§37 iii 17'–33') [... cit]ies of the sto[re]houses [...] the cities [...]muha, Har-kiya, [...], Zelmutta, Tappaspa, [...]ukziya, Asurna, Ānzara[...], Samuha, Marista, Ku[...], H]urma, Wargassa, [...]assass[a], Salitta, [...], Samlussa, Gulpina, S[ar..., ...m]a, Pisa, Pawazziya, [...]riya, Sienzana, Wastis[...]nuanda, [...]i]ssa, Kuwasariya, Uin[...]a, [...]a, Ikkuwaniya, Hurniya, [...], Hadawa...a, Hurutta, Terumna, N[a...], Ulass[a], Parminiya, Parsuhanda, the mountain, the cities [...], Suplanda, and the river Hūlaya. Total: 60[+? ...] store[houses].

§38 iii 34'–42') [...] (the cities) [...]hass[a], [...]anta[...], [...]ya, Kuwanna, [...], Lahūrama, Ha[...], Harahara, Mallita[...], Harsuwa, Tipala, Kursan[...], Suwanzuwanna, Tamluta, Pikumi[...], ...mashuna, Siharna, Halippasuwa, Kalasummiya, Hūlan[ta]. Total: 34 cities of the storehouse, [of] fodder mixture.

§39 iii 43'–48') And I again multiplied grain [...] the farmers, those fields ... [...] let them [s]eal. Those lands ... [...] they work falsity. And beyond the yield¹¹⁶ they bound either one measure or two measures. And they drank the blood of the land. Now let them not work (falsity) any longer. Whoever does it, [let them give] him an evil pestile[nce].

§40 iii 49'–54') In the future, whoever should bec[om]e king after me—the gra[in] you must impress in your name.¹¹⁷ See, the administrators of the storehouse will [n]eglect you and they will say to you as follows: “[...] ... And do not imp[ress] it” [...] ... And see, th[ey] will elevate you [...] not ... [...]

§41 iii 55'–60') [...] you [...] house ... [...] store[house]. The administrators [...] grain. One-half ... of grain ... [...] ... [...] ... [...] ... they will [mul]tiply, an[d ...] ... [...]

§42 iii 61'–63') [...] ... [...] ... [...]

§43 iii 64'–68') [...] ... [...] they [be]gan/[arr]ived [...]

§44 iii 69'–75') [Whoever her]eafter [should become king after] m[e ...] ... [...] he says to you as follows: [...] But you—do not listen! [...] and if the captives [you] harness [...] you must replace the equipment, the troop[s ...]. And him, either for your wif[e] o[r ...]

§45 iv 1'–8') [...]

§46 iv 9'–14') [...] ... they do [...] *h* *ālī* bread no[t ...] ... but those, beer (and) wine ... him [...] ... they work. And ... [...]. Now, hereafter [...]. Behind the dagger in h[is] neck (...)

§47 iv 15'–20') [...] ... at the danger they were frightened. And when the father [...] ... And then from the mouth the [li]fe who ... [...] father (and) mother die. And the companions/siblings, a celebration [...] ... from the curse by war not [...] they were [p]acified. Whatever they do ... [...] ... he/she/it becomes.

116. For this word, see Hoffmann 1984, 98–108.

117. In this sentence, “you” is singular but “your” is plural; there seems to be some grammatical confusion.

§48 iv 21'–26') [I]f [lat]er the greed of mortals [...] ... they began to di[vi]de, and at the danger they [were] not [frightened]—and theref[ore] they were struck by the gods (text: “they—he was struck by the gods”). Now, herea[fter ...]. If the living fathers a porti[on ... In so]me way he calls, then that porti[on] he calls on [or]ally, then let them disown him from the household; he shall forfeit (his) portion.

§49 iv 27'–29') And (for) a case of bloodshed, thus: The one who commits bloodshed—then whatever the “lord of the blood” (i.e., the party of the victim) says (is the penalty). If he says, “Let him die,” then let him die. But if he says, “Let him compensate,” then let him compensate. But for the king (there is) nothing.

§50 iv 30'–34') For (a case of) sorcery in Hattusa: You¹¹⁸ must purge (these) deeds. The one within the family who knows the sorcery—you must seize him from the family and you must take him to the gate of the palace. But the one who does not take him—it will come (to pass that) for that person (and) for his household it will be bad.

Colophon iv 35'–36') First tablet of Telipinu. Finished.

3.3 APOLOGETIC ANALYSIS

The historical uncertainties surrounding Telipinu's accession obscure the apologetic analysis of this edict. One struggles especially to understand the public perception of this figure—with many holes to be filled in, including the backgrounds of the main parties, one cannot discern whether men like Telipinu and Huzziya would have been viewed as having some natural right to the throne or as being entirely illegitimate. With the other apologists under consideration in this study, one can confidently assert that even if they were not usurpers (as the apologies proclaim), they at least looked like usurpers. Each doubtless faced significant resistance from opposing factions, and the public at large must have harbored suspicions concerning the propriety of the new ruler's rise. This most likely applies to Telipinu also, but it involves a greater degree of conjecture.

The primary rhetorical strategy that Telipinu employs is perfectly clear, however. Through the prefatory retrospective of the Proclamation, Telipinu portrays a sequence of two eras of history—first, a glorious era in the nascent Hittite Empire when military campaigns were unqualified successes and the land was prosperous; second, a disastrous era when enemies revolted against Hatti, crops failed, and the empire declined. In each era, as the royal family went, so went the land. During the glorious era the royal family was stable. Telipinu repeats the same phrase almost verbatim when introducing the three great early rulers: “His sons, his brothers, his in-laws, his blood relatives, and his troops also were gathered” (DUMU.MEŠ-ŠU ŠEŠ.MEŠ-ŠU ^{LÚ.MEŠ}gaenaš≈šešš≈a ^{LÚ.MEŠ}h̄ aššannaš≈šaš U ERIM.MEŠ-ŠU

118. Here and throughout this paragraph, “you” indicates the second-person plural.

taruppanteš ešer, cf. i 2–4, 13–15, 24–26). During the disastrous era, however, conspiracy and assassination within the royal family dissolved this stability. These crimes called for divine retribution, which manifested itself in the nation's decline.

Although there might be some truth to a Hittite rise and fall in the periods Telipinu describes,¹¹⁹ his black-and-white portrayal of the two archetypal eras deliberately sets the stage for his own rule. He lays the blame for the nation's downfall on bloodshed. This motif recurs throughout the retrospective¹²⁰ and is stated explicitly in the edict: "Formerly bloodshed became rampant in Hattusa, and the gods returned it upon the royal family" (*karū~wa ešhar* ^{URU}*hattuši makkešta / nu~war~at~apa* DINGIR.MEŠ-*iš šallai haššannai dāer*, ii 48–49). The bloodshed began during Mursili's reign, when palace servants "began to shed their [lords'] blood" (*nu ešhar~šummit*ⁱ *ēššuwan tiēr*, i 23), and it continued unabated through the following generations. Telipinu's rhetoric implies that only through ending the bloodshed can he conclude the disastrous era and lead the Hittites back to the golden age. He therefore portrays himself as the antithesis of his predecessors, namely, as a man of mercy. He first spares Huzziya's brothers, proclaiming, "Those did evil to me, but I [will not do evil] to them" (*apē~wa~mu idalu iēr ug~a~war~uš* [HUL-lu UL *iyami*], ii 15). This is the common motif of the merciful victor—to demonstrate his commitment to mercy, Telipinu spares even those whom he would be within his rights to punish. Next, Telipinu commutes the death sentence of the convicted

119. So far as we can tell from the few historical records, the late seventeenth century BCE was a time of growth for the Hittite Old Kingdom, culminating in the conquests of Aleppo and Babylon by Mursili I in 1595. But the following decades, corresponding to the disastrous era described in the Proclamation, witnessed the rise of the Hurrian state of Mitanni, which serves as the background to the military setbacks Telipinu describes. Moreover, theories abound that drought and famine were widespread throughout the Near East during this time, which could explain the failures of crops that he mentions. Thus, Telipinu may well have taken power during a period of Hittite decline and exploited a preexisting golden-age thinking common to the people. Even if this is the case, his use of the retrospective is far more propagandistic than objectively historical. Hoffner writes, "But one wonders if the author [of the Proclamation] ... has not mistaken the effect for the cause. It was patently in the interest of this Telepinu (himself a usurper) to blame the failures of the preceding rulers on their own policies rather than on a combination of external conditions beyond their control" (Hoffner 1973, 205). Liverani points out that the Bilingual Testament of Hattusili I demonstrates some conflict within the royal family even in the era of prosperity, and he too suggests that the international situation had more impact on the decline of the Old Kingdom than instability in the monarchy (2004, 33–35).

120. "The words which characterize the narrative of paragraphs 10–22 are 'blood, killed, avenged.' As the age of the first three kings was characterized by unity and success, so that of the following four kings was characterized by intrigue, murder, and defeat. Disaster at home is typified by the crop failures mentioned in the reign of Ammuna (§20). Disaster abroad is illustrated by the defeats of the Hittite armies also in the reign of Ammuna (§21)" (Hoffner 1975, 52–53).

murderers of Huzziya and his brothers, again going beyond the societal norm to prevent further death—although, as we shall see below, he likely had ulterior motives in this case. Finally, Telipinu’s merciful nature is evidenced by the Proclamation itself, which is prefaced with an exhortation to avoid bloodshed (ii 34–35), and this theme continues throughout.¹²¹ Telipinu’s boundless mercy suffices to stanch the ubiquitous bloodshed, essentially bracketing the era of disaster as a temporary aberration from the normal state of affairs in Hatti.¹²² “Through ruthlessness the age of disgrace began; through mercy the age of disgrace was ended and the golden age restored” (Hoffner 1975, 52). Telipinu thus continues, or according to his account, resumes, the line of the great kings of Hatti.

But all of this propaganda only set the framework for Telipinu’s self-defense. His rise came at others’ fall, and his enemies did not hold him innocent in the recent rash of malefactions. Thus the Proclamation serves to present Telipinu’s apology, his self-defense against nameless accusers. In the following we will examine the charges made against Telipinu and how he responds to them in the Proclamation. A careful assessment of the text reveals two obvious accusations to which Telipinu responded, but we will first investigate the question of Telipinu’s legitimacy more broadly.¹²³

Telipinu had no claim to the throne?—Telipinu’s legitimacy. The issue of Telipinu’s legitimacy is peculiar in light of the other apologies in this study. While the other rulers under investigation (with the exception of Solomon) employ several avenues of staking a claim to the throne, Telipinu seems to take this for granted. As discussed in §2.1, usurpers tend to resort to three elements for establishing legitimacy: the will of the gods, the will of the (or a) predecessor, and the will of the people. The latter does not appear in the Proclamation; the text confines itself to

121. Although Telipinu encourages capital punishment for those who murder members of the royal family, the more progressive aspect of the edict seems to be that it restricts the punishment to the murderers alone (§§31–32).

122. Liverani takes the idea of bracketing the era of disaster a step too far. He suggests that Telipinu intentionally drew parallels between himself and Hantili, the first of the assassins, to suggest that any crimes he committed were institutional flaws and not issues of his own character. “Telipinu seems to have been interested in suggesting, while not openly stating so, that even if he had been a culprit, he had done nothing more than what had been done before him by many others. These other persons had not been charged, so why should he be charged? Telipinu also suggested that, if so many persons had acted in this manner, they had done so out of motives that transcended the personal. The cause should be looked for in the institutional organization, not in individual responsibilities” (2004, 43). Liverani seems so intent on finding some subtext here that he ignores the plain meaning of the text.

123. Liverani also suspects that Telipinu was implicated in the deaths of his wife and son, laconically described in §27 (2004, 42–43). I do not see sufficient evidence in the Proclamation to support this, however, especially since it is difficult to detect a motive for Telipinu to murder them.

the royal family and other officials and servants of the palace. The will of Telipinu's predecessor(s) is not applicable since his goal is to dissociate himself from his predecessors and inaugurate a new era.

Given this, one would expect to see the divine election motif emphasized, but Telipinu does not appeal to the will of the gods at any point during his legitimization. This point is extremely odd, all things considered. Hoffner understates the case when he describes the Proclamation as a "comparatively unreligious document" (1975, 53). Telipinu differs from the likes of Hattusili III and David, for whom divine backing is the primary means of legitimization and a recurrent theme throughout the apologies. But Telipinu does ascribe the decline of Hatti and the sundry problems within the royal family as divine retribution for royal misdeeds (§§13, 19–20, 30). Telipinu's lack of recourse to divine vengeance when explaining the deaths of Huzziya and his brothers, and when legitimating his own reign, begs explanation.

In the absence of recourse to divine election, royal prerogative, or popular acclamation, the fundamental element of a king's legitimacy lies in his membership within the royal family (royal affiliation rather than prerogative). But Telipinu is not forthcoming with regard to his genealogy either, a fact that has caused some misunderstanding regarding his legitimacy. For example, in his analysis of Telipinu's apology, Hoffner writes,

Unlike Ḫattušili III, Telepinu could not lay claim to royal descent. The nearest he approached to a family connection with the preceding kings was in his marriage to Ištapariya, the eldest sister of his predecessor, Ḫuzziya (BoTU II 23A, ii 9–10, §22). But since this was hardly a legitimate claim to kingship, he does not adduce that fact in his own support but only in passing as a kind of explanation for Ḫuzziya's alleged attempt on his life. Therefore, Telepinu's introduction is quite terse: "Thus (speaks) the Tabarna, Telepinu, the Great King." It is clear that the defense of both usurpers had to rest on grounds other than descent. (Hoffner 1975, 51)

There are two flaws in this statement. First, Telipinu probably could lay claim to royal descent. He introduces his reign by stating, "When (I), Telipinu, had sat on the throne of my father ..." (*mān≈šan^mtelipinuš INA^{GIS}GU.ZA ABI≈YA ēšḫ atⁱ ii 16*). Early scholars tended to interpret this in some sort of nonliteral way, on the basis of Telipinu's truncated titulary, his condemnation of Ammuna, and his need to legitimize himself (apparently) through his wife. Some examples of such nonliteral interpretations include:

- Götze proposed that "father" here referred not to Telipinu's biological father, but his father-in-law (1957, 56; followed by Bin-Nun 1974, 114–16; Beckman 1986a, 22; Astour 1989, 24). Like many other early scholars, Götze considered both Huzziya and Ištapariya to be the children of

Ammuna, so that the latter, Telipinu's penultimate predecessor, was his father-in-law. On at least one occasion a Hittite king appointed a successor by adopting him as a "son"; Beckman, for example, writes, "It is obvious that the naming of the young men as 'son,' i.e., their adoption, is equivalent to their proclamation as heir to the throne" (1986a, 21). Following Götze (1957, 57) and Gurney (*CAH* 2/1, 669), Beckman also suspects that Telipinu adopted his son-in-law, Alluwamna, as his heir, and that the latter is afterward given the status "son of the king" (*DUMU LUGAL*; Beckman 1986a, 22 n. 47), though others suspect Alluwamna was Telipinu's biological son (Forlanini 2010, 120). Perhaps Ammuna did a similar adoption for Telipinu. Had this been the case, however, one would expect Telipinu to state it more explicitly. Additionally, the Proclamation takes an unfavorable stance toward Ammuna, saying that Hatti suffered on account of Ammuna assassinating his father (§§20–21).

- Alternatively, some have suggested that "father" in this case should be taken more broadly as "ancestor." Like Götze's, this idea attempts to read "father" more broadly without treating it as a purely rhetorical idiom. There is no evidence to support such a position, however, unless one speculates that Telipinu was a direct descendant of one of the great kings. This idea is presented and dismissed in Riemschneider 1971, 94–95 nn. 80–81; see the literature cited there for the proponents of this position.
- Otten, on the other hand, interpreted "sat on the throne of my father" as a legal fiction (1966, 122; cf. *COS* 1.76:196 n. 38). This must be Hoffner's position as well, but he never explicitly treats the phrase.

None of these interpretations can be categorically excluded due to the lacunae in our knowledge of the Old Hittite royal family. Indeed, I argue elsewhere that usurpers may sometimes reference their "father" in a sense not as straightforward as one's immediate biological progenitor (see my discussion of Hazael in ch. 7 and the literature cited there), but in this case none of the alternatives seems as probable as a literal reading of the phrase.

Today, the general consensus reads "my father" as a reference to Ammuna, the ruler prior to Huzziya. Those who advocate this position argue that Huzziya and Istapariya were not the children of Ammuna, but his nephew and niece. Telipinu was Ammuna's biological son, along with the murdered Tittiya and Hantili (whose fate Telipinu avoided either by his marriage to Huzziya's sister or simply by his own political savvy and luck). Riemschneider was one of the earliest proponents of this view. He argued that since all other known instances of the phrase "I sat on the throne of my father" come from sons who took the throne from their biological fathers, we should interpret this no differently (1971, 93–97). This alone does not clinch the argument, especially since all but one of Riemschneider's references come from the Empire period, when the succession system of father to

son was more firmly entrenched.¹²⁴ But the idea gained a following in the ensuing decades (cf. *CAH* 2/1, 663; Sürenhagen 1998, 91; Bryce 2005, 103, 417–18 n. 35), and recently Forlanini has provided further supporting evidence. In his prosopographical study, Forlanini cogently argues that papponymy, the practice of naming one's son after his grandfather, was prevalent in the Old Kingdom royal families. Since Telipinu named his own son Ammuna (ii 32), it is reasonable to conclude that Telipinu's father was King Ammuna (Forlanini 2010, 125–27; see also the two reconstructed family trees on pp. 119–20). One cannot assert Telipinu's paternity with certainty, but in light of all the evidence it seems quite probable that he was, in fact, a son of a previous king.

The second flaw with Hoffner's statement is that even if Telipinu were not related to the royal family biologically, his marriage to a "first-rank" (*ḫ antezziyar*) wife, Ištapiya (ii 10), did constitute a legitimate claim to the throne. This is implicit in the Proclamation itself, since Telipinu asserts that it was his marriage to Ištapiya that made him a target of Huzziya (§22).¹²⁵ With a divided royal family, preferential marriages between the two lines theoretically kept them united and assured their joint continuity. Even Otten, who adheres to the view that "my father" was a purely rhetorical expression, concurs: "Telipinus Anspruch auf den Thron gründete sich zweifellos auf seine Ehe mit Ištapija, der älteren Schwester des Huzziya" (1966, 122).

It seems, then, that Telipinu was a legitimate member of the royal family, likely through both blood and marriage. But in spite of this, and indeed because of this, Telipinu's deemphasis of his own credentials is startling—he could have emphasized the motif of royal affiliation, but he seems to have intentionally downplayed it. For one who doubtless assumed the throne amidst scores of detractors, Telipinu does little to reinforce his own appropriateness. His abrupt titulary¹²⁶ and

124. "Die Wendung 'sich auf den thron seines Vaters setzen' ist ziemlich häufig belegt. Bei allen Königen, von denen sie gebraucht wird, läßt sich mit Sicherheit nachweisen, daß sie wirklich Söhne vorher regierender Könige gewesen sind. Zum ersten Mal erscheint sie bei Ammuna, der nach dem Zeugnis des Telepinu-Erlasses tatsächlich der Sohn seines Vorgängers Zidanta war. Sie findet sich später bei Tutḫ alija, einem der Vorgänger Šuppiluliumas, bei Arnuwanda, und sehr häufig bei dessen Bruder Muṣṣili, bei Muwatalli und Ḫattušili, somit bei fast allen Königen der Großreichszeit. Wenn also das Wort 'Vater' in der Wendung 'Thron meines/seines Vaters' sich stets auf den leiblichen Vater des Königs bezieht, so ist es unberechtigt, einzig bei Telepinu, für dessen Genealogie es leider keine weiteren Hinweise gibt, dem Worte 'Vater' eine weitergefaßte Bedeutung zuschreiben zu wollen" (Riemschneider 1971, 95–96).

125. Even if the attempt on Telipinu's life were fabricated, as Hoffner seems to think, this explanation would not make sense unless the audience understood the marriage as placing him in the line of succession.

126. For example, compare the opening titulary of Telipinu's Proclamation, ("[Thus] Tabarna Telip[i]nu, Great King," i 1), to the opening titulary of our second text, the

failure to name his own father¹²⁷ suggest a unique rhetorical approach. I suspect that Telipinu deliberately avoided disclosing his own origins because he intended to dissociate himself from the preceding period (cf. Hoffner 1975, 53). He vilified Ammuna, who was likely his father, because Ammuna was a part of the disastrous era that concluded with the banishment of Huzziya. It would be counterproductive for Telipinu to draw attention to Ammuna immediately after portraying him as an assassin whose misdeeds wrought divine vengeance on Hatti. Moreover, if there is any truth to the brutality on display in the retrospective, the line of succession would have been in utter disarray by Telipinu's reign anyway. Telipinu recognized that however strong his credentials were, legitimating himself through kinship was a losing battle. Instead he sought a clean break with the past, as the Proclamation itself demonstrates. His subjects should not look to who he is to determine his appropriateness, but to what he will do for the kingdom—conclude the time of turmoil and usher in a new era of royal stability and national prosperity. Such, at least, was the intention.

In light of this, I submit that Telipinu's family background was not an obstacle to his legitimacy, hence his only passing reference to the idea of royal affiliation. His detractors questioned not who he was, but what he had done; not whether he had a claim to the throne, but whether he had acted on that claim appropriately. Thus the Proclamation does not respond to the charge of illegitimacy in and of itself, but specifically to the following charges of misconduct that delegitimated Telipinu.

Telipinu seized the throne without provocation. The first apparent charge leveled against Telipinu was that he usurped the throne from Huzziya. About the latter little is known,¹²⁸ and concerning the nature of his accession Telipinu is frustratingly vague. Two new bouts of murder (Tittiya and Hantili and their respective families) accompanied Ammuna's death, but Telipinu places the responsibility on the enigmatic Zurū, chief of the bodyguard, and never explicitly links them to Huzziya's rise. It is difficult to accept that Huzziya was uninvolved with these murders. But considering one of the aims of the Proclamation was to delegitimize Huzziya, it is equally difficult to accept that if Telipinu had cause to connect Huzz-

Autobiography of Hattusili III: "Thus Tabarna Hattusili, great king, king of Hatti, son of Mursili, great king, king of Hatti, grandson of Suppiluliuma, great king, king of Hatti, scion of Hattusili (I), king of Kussar" (i 1–4).

127. The very fact that one must reconstruct Telipinu's paternity is at odds with the fact that he came from royal stock. Almost without exception, the other well-attested rulers from anywhere in the ancient Near East whose parentage is unknown were usurpers (Hazael, Tiglath-pileser III, Sargon II, Nabonidus, etc.).

128. On the basis of prosopography, Forlanini places Huzziya in the northern Hittite royal line, the rival of the southern royal line including Ammuna and Telipinu (2010, 124–25). This may well be correct, but I hesitate to place too much weight on it without further confirmation.

iya to the murders, he would neglect to do so. In any event, Huzziya became king but was driven away by Telipinu, who then took the throne. This coup, described perfunctorily in the Proclamation, undoubtedly raised some eyebrows. Ousting a sitting monarch and taking the throne was unacceptable, so Telipinu had to defend his actions.

The defense comes through Telipinu's utilization of the motif of the unworthy predecessor. He does this succinctly but effectively. Telipinu provides little biography for Huzziya. He states that Huzziya ruled (ii 9) and that he was killed (ii 26), but the only action of Huzziya is that "When Huzziya (wanted to) kill them [Telipinu and his wife, Istapariya], the matter became known and Telipinu drove them away" (*mān≈uš≈kan* ^m*ḫ* *uzziyaš kuenta nu uttar išduwāti / nu≈uš* ^m*telipinuš arḫ a paraḫ* *tq* ii 11–12).¹²⁹ Telipinu's brevity on this issue is startling, especially when one compares it to the drawn-out accounts of the many misdeeds of Urhi-Tessup and Saul in the apologies of Hattusili III and David, respectively. One wonders whether Telipinu wanted to keep the narrative moving in order to disguise some disingenuousness on his part; alternatively, the matter may have indeed been so well known that Telipinu did not feel compelled to belabor it. Whatever the reason for his brevity was, the meaning of this short notice is clear. By his unprovoked attempt on Telipinu's life, Huzziya proved himself unworthy of the throne. Telipinu's coup was not for his own benefit, but an act of what Liverani calls "preventive retaliation" (2004, 42). With Huzziya out of the picture, someone must become king, and the job fell to Telipinu.¹³⁰

As outside observers, it is difficult to assess the legitimacy of Telipinu's coup.¹³¹ On the one hand, the recent strife within the royal family and rivalry between the

129. There are two confusing aspects of this sentence. First, Telipinu literally states, "When Huzziya killed them," despite the fact that the only possible referents of "them" are Telipinu and his wife, and they obviously were not killed. Like most commentators, I therefore see in this phrase an unexpressed idea of volition; Huzziya did not kill them, but sought to kill them. See for example Riemschneider, who seems to vacillate on how to interpret this: "Wem Huzziya hier nach dem Leben trachtete, ist mit Sicherheit nicht zu ermitteln. Aber offenbar fürchtete er, von seinem Schwager ausgeschaltet zu werden—ein Parallellfall hatte sich ja nach Hantilis Tod ereignet, als Zidanta seinen Schwager Kaššeni umbrachte—und er versuchte deshalb, Telipinu und dessen Familie zu beseitigen" (1971, 94).

The second point of confusion is the second "them"; Telipinu states that he "drove them away" but Huzziya is the only clear antecedent. For explanation of this pronoun, see p. 96 n. 107 in §3.2.2.

130. I do not mean to imply here that Telipinu intentionally uses the motif of passivity, as we see in the apologies of David and Nabonidus. If he does intend this, his use of the motif is quite subtle.

131. Among recent scholars, there seems to be a hung jury regarding whether Huzziya's plot against Telipinu's life was genuine. Those who accept Telipinu's account include Goedegebuure (2006, 229), Bryce (2005, 103), and Beckman (1986a, 22). Those who

two royal lines may well have cautioned Telipinu that his life was in danger. On the other hand, with only Huzziya standing between him and the throne, Telipinu did not lack a motive to remove him. In light of the ensuing events, however, the scales seem to tip against Telipinu's innocence in this matter. This leads us to the final charge against Telipinu.

Telipinu collaborated in the deaths of Huzziya and his brothers. This is the most obvious charge against Telipinu. It derives from §26 of the Proclamation, which deserves to be quoted in full:

(I), the king, did not [... Huz]ziya and his [br]others [*they killed*.
W]hen I, the king, heard, they [br]ought Tanuwa, Tahurwaili, [and]
Taruh[su], and the assembly sentenced them to death. But I, the
king, said, '[Wh]y should they die? They will not pursue the matter.'
And I, the king, made them into farmers and I took their weapons
from (their) shoulder(s) and I gave them *yokes*. (ii 26–30)

The beginning of this paragraph is preserved only in Exemplar A of the Proclamation, and a large crack runs directly through much of the first line. Just enough traces are preserved to establish the scenario: the recently deposed king, Huzziya, and his five brothers were all murdered, and three men were convicted of the crime and sentenced to death. When Telipinu learned of the events, he pardoned the perpetrators. Even Telipinu's most loyal supporters must have questioned his innocence here. The bald facts are these: Huzziya assumed the throne; Telipinu ousted and banished him; Telipinu assumed the throne; Huzziya and his family were assassinated; the assassins, although apprehended, went unpunished. Huzziya was a victim, and Telipinu gained everything at his expense. When Telipinu pardoned the murderers it incriminated him further, making him appear complicit. How could Telipinu not have been involved?

He provides a twofold defense. He first points out that he explicitly ordered that no harm should befall Huzziya and his brothers. As part of the demonstration of his boundless mercy that will end the period of bloodshed, after banishing Huzziya, Telipinu states, "[Huzziya] (had) five br[ot]hers, and he constructed houses for them, saying, 'Let them go! Let them live! And let them feast (and) drink! You shall not do a[ny] evil to them. And I proclaim, "Those did evil to me, but I [will not do evil] to them"' (ii 13–15). Telipinu protests that although he had reason to "do evil" to Huzziya after the latter's attempt on his life, he intended to let bygones be bygones and move on. His magnanimousness prevented him from any malevolent action against his former rival.

presume, or at least acknowledge the possibility, that the plot was a fabrication to justify Telipinu's own coup include Liverani (2004, 42), Astour (1989, 24), Hoffner (1975, 51), and Riemschneider (1971, 94).

He bolsters this with an alibi—he could not have been involved with the murders because he was away on a military campaign. The way the Proclamation is crafted, §§24–25 serve on the surface level to demonstrate the restoration of divine goodwill toward Hatti. With the merciful Telipinu on the throne, the kingdom can again prosper. Since military setbacks served as the primary manifestation of divine disfavor, Telipinu's victory over the rebellious Lahha signals the reversal of fortunes.¹³² But within the context of the apology, these paragraphs serve another purpose, establishing his distance from scene of the crime (cf. Liverani 2004, 42). Telipinu subtly reinforces this in the following paragraph when he states, “[W]hen I, the king, heard ...” (ii 27). He claims to have had no prior knowledge of the murder plot.¹³³

Telipinu concludes his denial of involvement in Huzziya's demise by justifying his decision to commute the death sentence of the convicted murderers. Unbiased observers must have interpreted his lenience toward the murderers as proof of his collusion, but Telipinu stresses that this is not the case. He declares that his granting a reprieve stemmed not from gratitude but from the continued effusion of his mercy. Even though these men committed heinous deeds, he argues, he is so committed to ending the bloodshed that he will give them a second chance. He attempts to transform the justification into further proof of his benevolence. Although a crafty move on the rhetorical level, this final aspect of the defense comes off as weak.¹³⁴

As with the previous charge, we lack sufficient evidence to convict Telipinu beyond a reasonable doubt. But one cannot ignore the circumstantial evidence. Liverani accused Telipinu of complicity in Huzziya's murder (2004, 42), and I am compelled to agree.¹³⁵ With regard to the most significant allegation against Telipinu, it seems his defense is rather disingenuous.¹³⁶

132. This is especially the case if my restoration of the phrase, “(Then) [the gods] gave him into my hand” (*n=an* [DINGIR.MEŠ] / *kiššari=mi dāer*, ii 21–22), is correct.

133. Note also that Hoffmann restores the verb *šaqaḥ ḥ urī* “I knew” in ii 26, translating, “Ich, der [Köni]g, w[ußt]e (es) nicht” (1984, 31). If this is correct, and it is feasible, then Telipinu's disavowal of collaborating with the murderers is not subtle at all, but explicit.

134. Liverani puts it well, writing, “[Telipinu's] complicity is evident, yet he again tried to turn that suspicion into a boast, once more one of generosity, good will, and tolerance. Unwilling to kill even in order to execute the culprits legally, how could Telipinu have been suspected of any complicity in illegal murder?” (2004, 42).

135. Most commentators ignore the issue of Telipinu's complicity in the crime. One exception is Bryce, who accepts Telipinu's statement that he ordered that no more harm befall Huzziya in good faith (2005, 103), but “In spite of his instructions, the deposed king Huzziya and his five brothers were secretly murdered” (2005, 106). This is the sort of uncritical reading symptomatic of historical reconstructions of the Hittite Old Kingdom written in the early twentieth century, and it merits reappraisal.

136. On the whole, Telipinu's account of his interaction with Huzziya contains several

3.4 THE *SITZ IM LEBEN* OF THE PROCLAMATION OF TELIPINU

Although all extant exemplars of the Proclamation date to the centuries following his reign, there is no reason to question whether Telipinu himself commissioned the text. Several features of the text indicate that the Empire-period copies derive from an earlier stage of the language.¹³⁷ Unfortunately, the text furnishes no clues as to when it was composed during the course of Telipinu's reign. The only events mentioned are Telipinu going on one campaign and the deaths of Huzziya, and later Istapariya and the younger Ammuna. Without outside sources to inform us about the chronology of Telipinu's reign, we must profess ignorance as to whether the apology served to defend his assumption of the throne at the onset of his reign or as he approached his final years.

The Proclamation vacillates between two audiences, neither of which appears until the edict. On the surface, the edict provides instructions to future kings. For example, §29 uses the second-person singular throughout, and provides instructions to "he who will become king after me" (ii 40) on how to avoid a relapse of strife within the royal family. Later, §§40 and 44 also seem to instruct the future king on certain matters, though these paragraphs are too fragmentary to treat with certainty. The Proclamation does not attempt to conceal its more immediate audience, however; in fact, Telipinu identifies them explicitly. In the paragraph following the first instruction to a future ruler, Telipinu states, "You are his assembly" (*šumešš≈a pankuš≈ši<š>*, ii 47; cf. also ii 72). Here he uses second-person plural pronouns and verbs, and he does so elsewhere in the edict also (§§33, 50). The *panku* ("assembly") was a group of upper-echelon officials (Beckman 1982, 442; cf. §33 of the Proclamation) who gathered occasionally, when summoned by the king. Though Beckman describes the *panku* as having a judicial function, he em-

similarities to the apology of David. Both Telipinu and David emphasize their unwillingness to kill their main adversary, even when given legitimate grounds to do so. Both present an alibi regarding their whereabouts at the time of their adversary's death (for David, this applies to several adversaries who meet their demise at times convenient to him). Both also seem to have a particular hit man who, when found guilty of certain murders to their advantage, is censured but escapes any tangible punishment. For more on these occurrences in the David narrative, see below, §5.3.

137. *Contra* Hoffmann, who writes, "Der Telipinu-Erlaß liegt uns aber nicht in seinem Urzustand, sondern nur in Abschriften vor, die nachweislich Änderungen vorgenommen haben" (1984, 95). Although some modernizations are evident in the later copies, the text on the whole maintains the character of an Old Hittite composition. Starke rebuts this claim of Hoffmann's and provides an exhaustive list of the diagnostic features of the Proclamation that suggest its early date (1985, 103–11). Hoffmann herself does not question that the text dates to Telipinu; she argues only that the Hittite version is a later translation. See above, p. 76 n. 11.

phasizes that they served primarily to witness the king's decisions, not to make the decisions themselves. It appears that the *panku* had little, if any, actual authority.¹³⁸

With the date and audience of the text established, the final issue we must investigate is the purpose of the Proclamation. Despite the fact that the retrospective represents a substantial portion of the entire document, its purpose is clearly to lay the groundwork for the edict, so we can agree with Goedegebuure that "The main purpose of the proclamation however is not historiographical but administrative" (*HST* 107, 228). Correctly interpreting the edict is crucial to grasping the entire text. But interpretation of the edict is no simple task, and scholars have offered a variety of explanations as to its significance. I submit that the key to interpreting the edict lies in resolving two issues: (1) How does the edict affect the Hittite system of succession? and (2) What ties the edict together? Nearly everyone who has treated the Proclamation has weighed in on the subject of what system of succession prevailed prior to Telipinu. I will provide only a brief summary of the four major positions here:

1. Elective (*Wahlkönigtum*). No longer widely held, Götze espoused the idea that each king was elected by the *panku* and served as *primus inter pares* rather than absolute ruler (1974, 86–88). There is little evidence for this, however; Götze based the idea largely on the Indo-European roots of the Hittites ("Diese Auffassung des Königtums ist ganz unorientalisch; nichts von Absolutismus und Gottesgnadentum" [1974, 88]). Bryce allows for a system of elective kingship at the outset of the Old Kingdom but asserts that Hattusili I effectively ended this when he declared his own successor, as reflected in the Bilingual Testament (2005, 108). But this seems to place too much weight on an uncritical reading of the Testament.
2. Patrilineal. The patrilineal view continues to have many proponents. Beckman provided a thorough defense for the position, pointing to such evidence as the ubiquitous patrilineality throughout the rest of Hittite culture, the "son" terminology for declaring successors, the repeated schemes by usurpers to wipe out entire family lines, suggesting hereditary rights, and more (1986a). Anticipating some of these arguments, Bin-Nun declared that patrilineal succession in the Hittite Old Kingdom was "obvious" (1975, 27). Proponents of this view do not, however, presume that the principle of primogeniture also held. The king elected his successor from among the pool of eligible candidates, his first-rank sons (Bryce 2005, 108; he describes this at more length in 1983, 111–12; also Beckman 1986a, 24–25). There are two main objections to this view.

138. "Indeed, these texts [the Hittite Laws] demonstrate clearly that the law in all of its aspects—promulgation, civil adjudication, and criminal judgment—was normally the province of the king" (Beckman 1982, 440).

First, it fails to explain Hattusili I's claim to legitimacy by virtue of being "the brother's son of (the) Tawananna" in the Bilingual Testament. Second, it does not adequately account for the constant usurpations during the generations preceding Telipinu. The view of Forlanini, which I adhere to, is essentially patrilineal, but accounts for these objections. See below.

3. Matrilineal. Building on the work of Russian scholars, Riemschneider (1971) argued in favor of a matrilineal principle, according to which the kingship passed through the eldest daughter. The husband taken for the daughter would become the successor, whose eldest daughter would marry the next successor, and so forth. Riemschneider pointed to the significance of women in several of the successions, seen particularly in the enigmatic position of Tawananna, as evidence that the royal line ran through them. But this view relies too heavily on how one reconstructs the poorly documented royal family lines (note that only two of the five women who demonstrate the principle in Riemschneider's chart are firmly established; see Riemschneider 1971, 97). It also fails to explain the examples—including Telipinu himself—where a ruler boasts of sitting on the throne of his father. Riemschneider is forced to accept the patrilineal principle did carry some weight among the people: "Wie können also sagen, daß das matrilineare Thronfolgeprinzip in der Zeit von Hattušili bis Telipinu virtuell existiert hat, wenn auch in ständiger Auseinandersetzung mit den Verfechtern der patriarchalischen Thronfolge" (1971, 98).
4. Avunculate. Sürenhagen recently proposed the avunculate system as a solution to understanding the Old Hittite succession rules (1998, followed by Goedegebuure in *HST* 107, 229). According to this system, the royal household consisted of two major lines (see Sürenhagen 1998, 93). The eldest sister of each incumbent king would marry her cousin; their son would become the next king. Their daughter, meanwhile, would marry the son of the former king (also her cousin), and their eldest son would become the next king. Thus, in theory, the grandson of any given king would also be king, but not their son. This system explains the evidence from the Bilingual Testament well, and acknowledges the evidence for two major lines within the royal family. But as with Riemschneider's proposal, Sürenhagen's relies heavily on his idiosyncratic reconstruction of the family tree.

Each of these proposals has its problems, and it is likely that this is because the system of succession was at best convoluted, and perhaps a standard protocol was absent entirely. But although scholars disagree about the previous succession rules, there is general consensus that the goal of the edict in this regard was to

establish a patrilineal system.¹³⁹ I concur with this, but I submit that the ramifications of this maneuver require further investigation, especially in light of recent work on the Hittite royal houses. Forlanini reconciles the various viewpoints by positing that the system of succession was theoretically patrilineal but was consistently affected by political marriages among the different factions of the Hittite royal lines. This explains the continuous infusion of peripheral members of the royal household into the line of succession. Forlanini explains,

The previous principle [patrilinearity] may be inferred from actual examples, suggesting that the succession was established by the adoption of a nephew or a son-in-law, who became a sort of co-regent of the ruling king. This phenomenon has been explained with reference to ethnological parallels, but it was more likely the result of political agreements among royal branches of different origins. The artificial nature of the agreements is shown by their continuous interference with the patrilinear succession, leading each generation into a conflict between the son(s) of the former king and in-laws claiming to be legitimate heirs, probably by right of an original agreement that was renewed each generation through marriage and adoption. Telebinu provides a key to understanding this dynamic when he writes that in the beginning ‘in-laws (*kaenasses*) and direct relatives (men of the same *ḫ assata*) were united’, which may be interpreted as indicating that the rule of cross-marriages and adoptions was then recognized. (Forlanini 2010, 115)

If this is the case, then Telipinu’s edict regarding the succession does not confirm an existing convention at all; it proscribes the common practice of letting political marriages interfere with patrilineal succession. Telipinu seeks to prevent those of the so-called *antiyant*- (adopted son-in-law)¹⁴⁰ status from taking priority over the hereditary princes. Therefore, those who assert that the oft-debated §28 is a genuine reform are correct, but those who assert that the patrilineal principle gov-

139. Those scholars who suggest that the succession rules were always governed by patrilineal principles assume that Telipinu did not actually “reform” anything, but simply confirmed existing norms. For example, Hoffmann writes, “Und es ist auch keineswegs zu beweisen, daß Telipinu mit seinem Erlaß eine neue Thronfolgeordnung installieren wollte. Genau so gut möglich ist, daß er eine schon immer geübte Praxis schriftlich fixierte einschließlich der Bestimmung, daß auch eine Tochter den Thron erben konnte, falls kein männlicher Nachfolger da war” (1984, 91; see also Liverani 2004, 38–41).

140. This translation is imprecise as there is no English equivalent of this term. Beal defines the *antiyant*- as “a man who, rather than paying a *kušata* (bride price) to a girl’s father and then taking the girl to his (or his family’s) house as his wife, instead receives (or his father receives) a *kušata* from the girl’s family. Her family then takes the bridegroom into their house as a husband for the girl, and his loyalty ties are subsequently to her family” (Beal 1983, 117–18).

erned succession prior to Telipinu are also correct. The purpose of the reform is to institutionalize the preference for first- and second-rank sons of the king over those who marry into the family, of the *antiyant*- status (cf. Forlanini 2010, 116). This would effectively exclude the other royal lines from the kingship, maintaining it for Telipinu and his male descendants alone. If this interpretation is correct, in the edict Telipinu presents a major challenge to all other branches of the royal family, and undoubtedly earned himself several opponents.¹⁴¹ The rest of the edict anticipates this, and for this we should turn to the second question posed above: What ties the edict together?

With few exceptions, interpreters of the Proclamation have ignored one of the most conspicuous features of the text, namely, the apparent randomness of the edict. Much of the edict is broken, but enough remains to raise significant questions regarding Telipinu's overarching purpose for commissioning this text. The first paragraphs (§§28–34) concern rules for succession and how to deal with conflict within the royal family. Considering the problems with succession and the royal family outlined in the lengthy retrospective, this section of the edict follows easily and requires no further explanation. In fact, if the text ended here, one would regard the Proclamation as a perfectly coherent, well-crafted document. But the text continues with a series of agricultural reforms (§§35–41; see Singer 1984, 103–5), then other miscellaneous reforms including inheritance law (§48) and rules for dealing with murder (§49) and sorcery (§50). These passages appear at first glance to be a *non sequitur* at the end of a text hitherto concerned solely with the (in)stability of the royal household. The subject matter changes abruptly, undoing the otherwise neat structural arrangement of the text and rendering the Proclamation incohesive when viewed as a whole. So far as I know, Hoffner is the only scholar to deal with this problem directly. He writes, “Although superficially it might appear that the somewhat disorganized group of rulings at the end of Telepinu's text have no common theme, one can in fact relate all the rulings to the central concern of internecine strife and killings among the royal family! Thus even §50, which concerns persons in the royal family who practice sorcery, deals with the threat that the sorcerer poses to the lives of his relatives” (1975, 56). I think Hoffner is on the right track here, but he is not completely accurate. How, for example, can one connect a pair of agricultural reforms listing storehouse cities (§§37–38) with internecine strife?

I suspect that the reforms in the edict do share a common theme—not the narrower idea of family conflict that Hoffner proposes, but the broader issue of consolidation of royal power. Van den Hout argues that the reign of Telipinu was a

141. While Forlanini's work on the branches of the Hittite royal family is excellent, I disagree with his claims that Telipinu “must have wished to pacify opposing factions within the nobility” and “was presumably forced to be conciliatory” (2010, 115). I do not see how excluding other royal lines could possibly pacify them—and I suspect it is no coincidence that conflict within the royal family resumed shortly after Telipinu's death.

pivotal period in Hittite history, marked especially by the introduction of writing for state administration (2012, 76–80). This new technique allowed for a much more effective and systematic control over a wide region: “Anthropologische Studien von Jack Goody und anderen haben klar gemacht, dass im Gegensatz zu einer mündlichen Überlieferung Schrift längere Kommunikationslinien ermöglicht, Befehlen und Aufträgen eine größere Autorität verleihen kann und verwaltungstechnische Informationen über größere Gruppen von Menschen bewältigen kann” (2012, 79).¹⁴² Working from the premise that through the initial succession reforms (§§28–34) Telipinu sought to establish a dynastic principle in Hatti,¹⁴³ the further reforms should be interpreted as attempts to consolidate power within that dynasty.

142. In the original paper delivered at the Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, van den Hout followed this statement with a quotation from Lévi-Strauss’s *Tristes tropiques*, writing, “Negativ ausgedrückt: ‘la fonction primaire de la communication écrite est de faciliter l’asservissement.’”

143. The much-discussed §28 is the key to establishing the dynastic principle. As many previous scholars have noted, the following succession reforms (§§29–34) seek primarily to establish the security of the dynasty. Telipinu attempts to circumvent strife within the royal family by confirming that even members of the royal household are subject to legal procedures, and he exhorts the members of the *panku* to stay vigilant with regard to scheming against the royal family (see esp. §33).

But I disagree with Bryce, who sees Telipinu as essentially trading power for security: “The powers of future kings would be considerably circumscribed by the provisions of the *Proclamation*. It gave them little freedom in their choice of successor, it imposed a number of limitations on their judicial powers, and it rendered them liable to disciplinary authority by the *panku* for acts of violence committed against members of their own family. But while the king’s authority was to be limited in these ways, his position and personal safety were, in theory, made more secure by the powers assigned to the *panku*, which was charged primarily with the responsibility of ensuring his and his family’s safety, and of safeguarding the rights of succession” (2005, 111). Although the *Proclamation* does encourage the *panku* to ensure the royal family’s safety, it does not tangibly empower them. Moreover, it makes certain members of the royal family liable to judgment, but it does not actually render the king liable to anyone (*contra* Bryce 2005, 109, where he writes, “Indeed the king himself may have been liable to the death penalty if he shed the blood of members of his own family”). The one paragraph that deals with a king committing evil reads thus: “Moreover, whoever should become king and seeks evil against brother (or) sister—you are his assembly. You must say to him without inhibition, ‘This is a matter of blood! Look at the tablet! Formerly bloodshed became rampant in Hattusa, and the gods returned it upon the royal (lit. “great”) family.’” Telipinu does not empower the *panku* to litigate against the king; they can only encourage the king to amend his ways. If anything, the *Proclamation* reinforces royal immunity to whatever judicial function the *panku* served.

Note also that the *Proclamation* itself demonstrates the king’s final authority in judicial matters. In §26, discussed above, the *panku* sentences Tanuwa, Tahurwaili, and Taruhsu to death, but Telipinu unilaterally commutes the sentence.

In the agricultural reforms, one glimpses this in §§39–40. In these paragraphs, Telipinu vilifies the “administrators of the storehouse” (LÚ.MEŠ AGRIG É [N]^{A4}KIŠIB, iii 50') as having worked deceitfully and exploited their positions (“they drank the blood of the land” *n≈ašta utnē ēšh ar akkušker*, iii 47').¹⁴⁴ He therefore instructs his successor(s) to assume authority over the storehouses themselves. This increases royal authority, securing the power of the throne.¹⁴⁵ The lack of context for the final reforms renders any conclusions tentative, but the extant text lends itself to the theme of securing power for Telipinu's progeny. After a significant gap (six paragraphs, about thirty-five lines) with only a few words preserved, we can resume reading the Proclamation in §47. This and the following section apparently deal with inheritance law; the text records the death of a father and mother and some act of the companions/brothers (*ATḪŪ*, iv 17'), and the claiming and forfeiture of a portion (§48). The issue of inclusion and exclusion from a household recalls the topic of the demotion of the *antiyant*-, which I argue is essential to Telipinu's succession reform, and the mention of being “struck by the gods” (iv 23') summons the images of family strife from the retrospective, where divine vengeance is a theme. The same holds for §50, which deals with punishment for sorcery, but especially in the context of a “family” (*h aššannaq* iv 31', 32'). The edict establishes sorcery as another basis for removal from a family, which could become useful if Telipinu's line were to face opposition from other royal branches.¹⁴⁶ The only remaining decently preserved paragraph is §49, which is the most difficult to tie in to the edict. It appears to be a straightforward declaration giving the party of the victim authority over the penalty for the murderer. The reason for this reform's inclusion in the edict derives from the concluding phrase, “But for the king (there is) nothing” (LUGAL-*i≈ma≈apa lē kuitki*, iv 29'), which seems to divest the king of authority in deciding the penalty of homicide cases. Again, however, this meaning of this phrase is not entirely obvious without the context of the entire closing section of the edict.

In sum, I propose that Telipinu commissioned the Proclamation in order to justify his exclusion of other branches of the royal family from the Hittite throne,

144. The subject of this phrase is missing in the extant text, but it doubtless refers to the storehouse administrators or some other comparable officials.

145. “The AGRIGs [‘administrators’ in my translation], for some unknown reason, are not interested in sealing the grain with the royal seal. Telipinu instructs his successors to be prepared to enforce their will despite the AGRIGs’ attempt to avoid the regulation with one or another pretext. The anticipated ‘pretext’ given by the AGRIGs is unfortunately broken in this tablet (l. 51); it has to do with something that is lacking (NU.GÁL)” (Singer 1984, 105).

146. At first glance it seems that the order, “you must take him [the sorcerer] to the gate of the palace” (iv 32') pertains to citizens bringing the guilty party to the palace for judgment. If all of these reforms deal with matters within the palace, however, it could be that taking the person “to the gate of the palace” actually involves removing him from the palace, that is, taking him *out* to the gate. Without more context we cannot know with certainty.

to safeguard his own family line, and to consolidate power for the monarchy. The retrospective accomplished the first of these objectives by demonstrating the perils of competition among the royal houses; the edict accomplished the latter two objectives. The apology provides a bridge between the two. Telipinu legitimizes his own position on the throne, asserting that although he follows a long line of ambitious usurpers, his claim is legitimate and unimpeachable. Armed with the knowledge of the horrific past, he issues the edict not out of selfish desire to see his offspring securely in power, but as a means of returning the kingdom to prosperity. The Proclamation makes clear that the overarching goal is national stability; a new dynasty is simply the means to achieving this.

The numerous later copies suggest that the text circulated widely—it appears at any rate to have entered the scribal curriculum—but Telipinu's Proclamation met little short-term success (*contra* Haase 2003, 626). Tahurwaili—perhaps even the same man of this name whose death sentence was commuted by Telipinu—usurped the throne after Telipinu's death, and the kingdom remained in flux for several more generations until the rise of Tudhaliya II. The dynastic principle became the *status quo* shortly thereafter, not to be violated until the usurpation of Hattusili III in the mid-thirteenth century. He, too, crafted an apology in response to his accusers, and to it we turn next.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF HATTUSILI III

4.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF HATTUSILI'S ACCESSION

HATTUSILI III RULED Hatti during the floruit of the Empire period of the thirteenth century BCE, from ca. 1267–1240. Taking the throne two and a half centuries after Telipinu, the two kings share the fact that the reign of each is best documented by the partisan apology in which they defend their assumption of the Hittite throne. Beyond this, however, there is little similarity between the two. Whereas the Proclamation provides one of the few glimpses into the history of the Hittite Old Kingdom, Hattusili's Autobiography is complemented by a bevy of other sources, especially royal letters and treaties.¹ And whereas the identities of and relationships among the important persons during Telipinu's accession remain open to debate, the parties who played roles in Hattusili's accession are recognizable from other sources, and their loyalties and motivations are generally apparent (with some exceptions, such as Kuruntiya).

These differences illustrate an important issue that deserves some remarks here in light of the history of scholarship on apologetic in the ancient Near East. As noted above (§1.2), Harry Hoffner's "Propaganda and Political Justification in Hittite Historiography" has been arguably the most influential study of ancient Near Eastern apologetic, laying a foundation on which numerous others built. I cannot adequately praise Hoffner for his contribution, without which this volume would probably not exist. But careful examination reveals some flaws in Hoffner's study, flaws exacerbated by the fact that most subsequent scholars who have appropriated his material are not Hittitologists and are therefore ill equipped to analyze his argument critically.²

Most significantly, Hoffner overemphasizes the similarity of the Proclamation and the Autobiography, when in fact, the two apologies contrast markedly in character. Telipinu's apology proper is only a brief interlude between a long retrospective and a longer edict; it provides no background for the people involved and narrates only a few major events of the coup itself. Hattusili's apology begins with his childhood and continues throughout his entire rise through the Hittite ranks,

1. To illustrate this point, note that Klengel lists only six texts that pertain to Telipinu's reign in addition to the Proclamation (1998, 77–78), but sixty texts relevant for Hattusili's reign beyond the Autobiography (1998, 235–54).

2. For one recent example of this, see Knapp 2013, esp. 272–73 and n. 43.

concluding with his assumption of the throne. Telipinu's invocation of the gods is rare and seems perfunctory (and is completely absent in the section of the apology proper), but praise of Ishtar's providence saturates Hattusili's apology. There is no superficial connection between the two texts.

In light of this, Hoffner's claim that "it is not impossible to speak of a tradition of royal apologies in the Hittite kingdom or even of a certain loose literary form, which several of them seem to assume" (1975, 50) cannot be sustained. Telipinu's Proclamation and Hattusili's Autobiography lack any formal or structural similarity, and one cannot possibly classify them with the same literary genre if one wants to specify beyond "royal inscription." (One also wonders what other texts Hoffner refers to when mentioning "several" Hittite royal apologies.) Moreover, Hoffner goes too far when he states, "In both cases the narrative portions provide background for the legal portions, but since the Hattuşili sections are few in number (§§13–15 [12c–14]), one gains the impression that he perhaps only follows the documentary form in Telepinu's precedent" (1975, 55). The concluding paragraphs of the Autobiography are not legal, but dedicatory, further illustrating the difference between it and the Proclamation. More importantly, there is no basis for the assertion that Hattusili followed Telipinu's precedent when justifying his own accession.

The overstatement in Hoffner's work derives from missing the true point of connection between these texts, which is the similar situations that elicited each. Hoffner confuses the texts' common rhetorical genre (apologetic) with their contrasting literary genres; he therefore forces a formal connection where none exists. For more on this point, see §1.5 above. Genre confusion aside, Hoffner's recognition of the underlying apologetic link between the Proclamation and the Autobiography remains a profound insight.

We will now return to the topic of the history of Hattusili's rise to the throne, but understanding the circumstances of Hattusili's accession requires first recounting events of the reigns of his predecessors. The sequence of events I provide largely follows the Autobiography itself, so I must include the usual caveat about critically assessing Hattusili's narrative. Some of the episodes described can be corroborated by other sources, but others appear only in this text. As always, I intend to provide the history as objectively as I can here, avoiding the prejudices inherent to Hattusili's apologetic account.

According to the Autobiography, the great king Mursili II sired three sons: the eldest, Halpasulupi, an otherwise unknown individual³ whose lack of attestation elsewhere has suggested to some that he died in his youth (*HST* 115, 267; V. Parker 1998, 270 n. 4; Ünal 1974a, 4), the second, Muwatalli (II), and the young-

3. His name may also appear in one inventory list, but even if this is the same person, it sheds no light on what became of him (cf. Klengel 1998, 207 n. 312).

est, Hattusili.⁴ Mursili dedicated Hattusili to be a *šankunni*-priest of Ishtar,⁵ and when Mursili died in 1295 Hattusili's elder brother, Muwatalli, was promoted to great king of Hatti. During his twenty-three-year reign Hattusili's rise began.⁶

Muwatalli retrieved his brother from the service of Ishtar and bestowed military rank upon him, installing him first as "lord of the army" (EN KARAŠ, i 24) and then "chief of the bodyguard" (GAL MEŠEDIÜTTIM, i 25). Muwatalli then gave Hattusili charge of the entire Upper Land (i 26–27), the northeastern region of Hatti where the troublesome Kaskaean were encroaching on the kingdom. Hattusili devotes a significant portion of the Autobiography to extolling his military exploits during this time (§§5–7), and most commentators assume that he indeed regularly emerged victorious (van den Hout 1995a, 1109; Ünal 1974a, 49–51). But we possess little evidence with which to assess Hattusili's success beyond the Autobiography itself, the bias of which renders it of little use in this regard. Muwatalli's continued elevation of Hattusili speaks in his favor, but the final promotion can be interpreted in multiple ways. Muwatalli relocated the capital from Hattusa in the heartland of Hatti to Tarḫ untassa in the south and established Hattusili as a vassal king in Hakpiš (ii 61–63). At first glance this appears to be a strong vote of confidence in Hattusili's ability to restore order over the recalcitrant Kaskaean, but one wonders whether the Kaskaean ingress into northern Hatti elicited Muwatalli's move in the first place (see Klengel 1998, 212).⁷ One could argue that Hattusili's failure to keep the Kaskaean at bay resulted in his own promotion; that is, perhaps Muwatalli needed to move the capital south because of Hattusili's military failings, but he nevertheless required someone with military experience to maintain a pres-

4. Being the youngest child is a motif that appears in several apologies, such as those of David and Esarhaddon (though see the caveats in §2.1 pp. 55–56; Xerxes employs a similar motif in XPf §4, a brief passage with some apologetic elements in a longer inscription not treated in this study). Although Hattusili clearly includes this as a rhetorical strategy to demonstrate the lengths to which Ishtar went to elevate him (along with his sickness and his opponents), I suspect that this is an accurate statement. Cf. Imparati, who remarks that though it could be a literary *topos*, it would have been easily verifiable by the contemporary audience (1995, 144 n. 8).

5. Pecchioli Daddi provides a list of five Hittite princes who were dedicated to the priesthood as a manner of excluding them from succession (2006, 118), indicating that this was a common practice to avoid turmoil in situations where there were multiple legitimate candidates.

6. The most complete treatment of Hattusili's career under Muwatalli appears in Ünal 1974a, 47–91, but for the most pertinent parts Ünal generally just repeats Hattusili's version of events given in the Autobiography.

7. This assumes the idea, widely held in the twentieth century, that the Kaskaean threat to Hatti from the north precipitated Muwatalli's move of the capital to Tarḫuntassa. Singer has raised serious questions about this explanation, however (1998, 536–37); he instead posits that the primary motivation of Muwatalli's radical reform was religious (1998, 538–41).

ence in the north—thus he left Hattusili in control. This is not at all certain, but remains a plausible interpretation. While Hattusili rose in military status, we must reserve judgment as to how well he acquitted himself in this arena.

During this period, Hattusili made the first of two major enemies with whom he is concerned in the Autobiography. Muwatalli's elevation of Hattusili to the office of administrator of the Upper Land came at the expense of Arma-Tarhunta, their second cousin⁸ and the former holder of this position. Hattusili recounts two conflicts between Arma-Tarhunta and himself, the first a legal challenge in which he was acquitted of allegations launched by Arma-Tarhunta (§4), the second a situation in which Arma-Tarhunta attacked him somehow by means of sorcery (§§9–10a). Hattusili came through both of these conflicts unscathed, but Arma-Tarhunta's son Sipaziti would later attempt to avenge his father.

In any event, Hattusili maintained his position as ruler of the Upper Land until the death of his elder brother, whom he served loyally throughout his rule. Muwatalli left two sons (that we know of), Urhi-Tessup and Kuruntiya. The latter is an interesting and perplexing individual. According to the Bronze Tablet,⁹ which records a treaty between him and Hattusili's son and successor, Tudhaliya IV, Kuruntiya was removed from the palace and sent to Hattusili to be raised (Bronze Tablet §2). The treaty also describes a close relationship between the cousins Tudhaliya and Kuruntiya (Bronze Tablet §§13–14). Thus Kuruntiya was fully accepted into Hattusili's household, an acceptance that later manifested itself in Tudhaliya's elevation of Kuruntiya to the third-highest position in Hatti: "Only the crown prince shall be greater than the king of the land of Tarhuntassa [= Kuruntiya]; no one else shall be greater than he" (Bronze Tablet ii 80–81; translation following Beckman 1996, 113). This amicable relationship defied all odds since Kuruntiya was the (first-rank?) son of Muwatalli and therefore had a legitimate claim to Hattusili's throne.¹⁰

8. Arma-Tarhunta was the son of Zidā, the brother of Suppiluliuma I, Hattusili's grandfather (Bryce 2005, 456 n. 6; van den Hout 1998, 61).

9. The *editio princeps* of this important text is Otten 1988; for English translations see COS 2.18:100–106 and Beckman 1996, 108–18.

10. The circumstances surrounding Kuruntiya's dismissal from his father's household remain somewhat unclear, but Singer provides a feasible solution (2002a). He argues that the much-debated Danu-Hepa was the wife of Muwatalli, not Mursili II as is often thought. In the so-called Danu-Hepa Affair, she and her unnamed son were banished by Muwatalli for reasons unknown, as described in §4' of Hattusili's prayer to the Sungoddess of Arinna. He speculates that this unnamed son was Kuruntiya. This argument cannot be proven, but it fits the various pieces of the puzzle together remarkably well. If it is correct, then Kuruntiya indeed was a "first-rank" son of Muwatalli and would theoretically have been first in line to the throne of Hatti. Obviously, Muwatalli did not agree, since he designated Urhi-Tessup as his successor (see below).

Things did not go so well between Kuruntiya's brother, Urhi-Tessup, and Hattusili. While Kuruntiya was dispatched to the Upper Land to grow up with Hattusili, Urhi-Tessup was raised by Muwatalli as his designated successor and may have even been installed as coregent prior to Muwatalli's death.¹¹ He assumed the throne and reigned as great king for five years¹² under the throne name Mursili (III), in the process becoming Hattusili's second major enemy. His brief rule is known primarily through the Autobiography and other accounts of Hattusili, all of which tendentiously portray him as the unjustified aggressor in a scheme to strip Hattusili of all his power (see especially §10c). One independently attested maneuver of Urhi-Tessup does come to bear on Hattusili's accession, however. Urhi-Tessup rescinded Muwatalli's relocation of the Hittite capital to Tarhuntassa, taking the gods and returning the seat of administration to Hattusa. This move back within the bend of the Halys River, not far from the Upper Land that provided the seat of Hattusili's power, surely displeased the latter and brought uncle and nephew into conflict.¹³

11. Urhi-Tessup's status, at least in the eyes of his father, seems to be established thanks to a pair of seals depicting Muwatalli and Urhi-Tessup together and declaring the latter *tuh kanti* "heir presumptive" or "crown prince" (Hawkins 2001, anticipated by Klengel 1998, 226 and Houwink ten Cate 1994, 239).

Urhi-Tessup's legitimacy in the eyes of others, however, remains more open to debate. For example, Hawkins writes, "It has otherwise been supposed that this succession may have been contested and that Urhi-Tešub's successful assumption of the throne was due to the vital support of Hattusili. But this is not to deny that he was the legitimate and recognized heir to Muwatalli: the recent appearance of these seals assure [*sic*] us incontrovertibly that this was so" (2001, 176).

12. Most Hittite chronologies suppose that Urhi-Tessup reigned from 1272–1267 (Bryce 2005, xv). This contradicts the Autobiography, in which Hattusili claims that he suffered under Urhi-Tessup's oppressive rule for seven years (iii 62'). I assume the "seven" is a literary *topos* here, though there are ways of reworking the chronology to allow for a slightly longer rule for Urhi-Tessup; van den Hout dates the start of his reign to "around 1274" (1998, 53).

13. Hattusili's reaction to Urhi-Tessup's relocation of the capital is admittedly inferential. The scenario becomes particularly murky in light of a prayer of Hattusili, which reads in part (following the translation and reconstruction of Houwink ten Cate 1974, 126): "... I] was [not involved] in the order to trans[fer] the gods. [For me it was a matter] of coercion, (while) he was my master, but [the transfer] of the gods was not in accordance with [my] wishes [and] I was afraid for that [order]. And the silver (and) gold of all the gods, to which god he gave the silver (and) gold of each of them, in that decision[, too,] I was not in any way involved" (KBo XIV 7 i 6–15; an accessible translation of the entire prayer can be found in Singer 2002b, 97–101). No name appears in this section of the text, and if one were to interpret it as a condemnation of Urhi-Tessup's re-relocation of the capital back to Hattusa, this would make good sense. Although Hattusili does not explicitly mention Urhi-Tessup's move of the capital in his Autobiography, it seems quite reasonable that this was connected to the diminution of Hattusili's administrative offices to which he strongly objects (Klengel

Urhi-Tessup eventually marched on Hattusili, along the way rallying to his side Sipaziti, son of Arma-Tarhunta, the earlier-removed administrator of the Upper Land and opponent of Hattusili (iv 3–4).¹⁴ Details of the skirmish elude us, although one fragmentary text of Hattusili records that the citizens of the city Samuha turned on Urhi-Tessup and offered to kill him for Hattusili.¹⁵ He turned down this offer, electing to keep his nephew alive. He initially demoted him to administer cities in the land Nuhasi in Syria, but afterward exiled him “toward the sea”¹⁶ on the grounds of his conspiring to regain the throne (iv 34–36). Sipaziti too was banished (“they forced [him] to cross the border,” iv 37) and his household was confiscated and dedicated to Ishtar (iv 37–38).

His enemies removed, Hattusili assumed the title of great king of Hatti, placing him on par with the other rulers of the “Great Powers’ Club”¹⁷ of the Late Bronze Age.¹⁸ One of his first acts involved establishing Kuruntiya, brother of

1998, 226; cf. Ünal 1974a, 112–13). Thus, Hattusili would have felt threatened early on by Urhi-Tessup.

But the context of the passage given above—following a discussion of the reign of Mursili II, and prior to one mentioning Muwatalli’s death—strongly suggests that Hattusili here condemns his brother’s initial relocation of the capital to Tarhuntassa. This was the position of Houwink ten Cate in his first treatment of the text (1974, 125–26), though he later, without much explanation, changed his position and asserted that Hattusili directed this condemnation toward Urhi-Tessup (1994, 234 n. 5). His first position seems more likely to me based on the context within the prayer, even if it is not as easy to incorporate into an historical reconstruction. It does not help that in the Autobiography Hattusili comes off as ambivalent to Muwatalli’s relocation (which he mentions twice, ii 1–2, 52–53) and ignores Urhi-Tessup’s re-relocation entirely.

Based on Houwink ten Cate’s earlier publication, Bryce suggested that Hattusili initially supported Urhi-Tessup and the return of the capital to Hattusa (2005, 253–55, 259–60), and the falling out of the two occurred only later. But even if Hattusili disapproved of the initial relocation of the capital, I find it hard to believe that he desired that his nephew reestablish a base of power so close to his own. I find it far more likely that Hattusili and Urhi-Tessup were opponents from the beginning since each had good reason to feel intimidated by the other.

14. Bryce speculates that Urhi-Tessup sought Sipaziti’s help not only because Hattusili banished some members of Arma-Tarhunta’s household (iii 28–29), but also because he could exploit his family connections with the Upper Land to draw support away from Hattusili’s power base. He further suggests that Urhi-Tessup may have lured him with the promise of restoring him to the position of administrator of the Upper Land upon Hattusili’s removal (2005, 262). Such a reconstruction, although lacking evidence, makes good sense, but in any event their alliance was unsuccessful.

15. This appears in KBo VI 29+, which I discuss below in §4.4.

16. For some possible meanings of this expression, see Klengel 1998, 232–33.

17. I borrow this term from Liverani 2000.

18. So Hattusili claims in the Autobiography (§12b), anyway, though many have pointed

Urhi-Tessup, as vassal king in Tarhuntassa.¹⁹ Hattusili reigned for nearly four decades, marked by stability in Hatti and the fostering of a peaceful relationship with Egypt. Urhi-Tessup continued to make bids to reclaim the kingship, but nothing ever came of them. The rest of Hattusili's reign lies beyond the confines of this study. He remains the best known of the Hittite kings, one of few for whom we can establish some personal characteristics. For more thorough biographies of this ruler, see Bryce 2005, 246–94, Klengel 1998, 254–73, van den Hout 1995a, and especially the monograph by Ünal (1974a).

4.2 THE TEXT

The Autobiography of Hattusili III (commonly referred to in the secondary literature as the Apology of Hattusili III) is the best-known Hittite historiographical text, and with good reason. It covers several decades in the career of Hattusili, made possible by its comparative length—my eclectic edition includes 326 lines, easily surpassing all other apologies in this study except that of David, the length of which is difficult to quantify.²⁰ The text is preserved well; the primary exemplar (KUB I 1+; Otten's Exemplar A) preserves about three-fourths of the text and another mostly complete exemplar (KBo III 6+; Otten's Exemplar B) can fill in many of the gaps.²¹ Numerous copies of the text survive.²² They date from Hattusili's reign to the very end of the Empire period two generations after Hattusili's death. Moreover, all the witnesses whose provenance we know come from the same place, the archive in the eastern section of the Great Temple of Hattusa (modern Boğazköy; Otten 1981, 1). As with Telipinu's Proclamation, horizontal rulings divide the text

out that he was not immediately accepted as a “brother” king at the outset of his reign, as evidenced by his letters complaining to Ramses II and Adad-nārārī I about lack of respect (van den Hout 1995a, 1114).

19. This assumes that Ulmi-Tessup, who is placed as vassal king of Tarhuntassa in a preserved treaty with Hattusili, is simply the Hurrian name of Kuruntiya. This is the majority opinion now (see for example Singer 2001, 400 n. 22 and Beckman 1996, 102), though van den Hout interprets Ulmi-Tessup and Kuruntiya as two different individuals (1989). For this treaty see Beckman 1996, 104–8; van den Hout 1995b, 22–73.

20. The Bisitun Inscription of Darius, which I do not treat in this study though it is arguably the purest example of an ancient Near Eastern apology apart from Hattusili's, is also slightly longer than the Autobiography.

21. Otten also provides a handy graphic representation of which parts of each tablet are preserved for a given exemplar (1981, 58–65).

22. Van den Hout's translation (COS 1.77:199) identified at least eight different manuscripts. But see now the *Kondordanz* for a current listing of the many joins and duplicates.

into “paragraphs,” though they are fewer and longer in the Autobiography, with only fourteen total.²³

The excellent state of the textual witnesses and its popularity in modern scholarship make the Autobiography an accessible text. Otten published the standard edition, *Die Apologie Hattusilis III.: Das Bild der Überlieferung* in 1981. Though lacking in analysis, Otten’s edition does a marvelous job presenting the many exemplars and allowing other scholars to treat the text. The most widespread English translation at present is that of van den Hout (*COS* 1.77:199–204).

Between the introduction (§§1–2) and the concluding dedication to Ishtar of Samuha (§§12c–14), the text contains an autobiography that divides neatly into three periods. The first brief section describes Hattusili’s youth during his father’s reign (§3); the second, and longest, documents Hattusili’s career under the rule of his brother (§§4–10a); the final historiographical section (§§10b–12b) describes his conflict with Urhi-Tessup and his usurpation of the throne.

4.2.1 Outline

I	§§1–2 = i 1–8	Titulary and Introduction
II	§3 = i 9–21	The Reign of Mursili II: Hattusili Is Dedicated to Ishtar
III	§§4–5 = i 22–74	The Reign of Muwatalli II: Hattusili Is Given Control of the Upper Land; Conflict with Arma-Tarhunta
IV	§§6a–10a = i 75–iii 30’	The Reign of Muwatalli II: Hattusili Continues to Prosper in the Upper Land
V	§10b = iii 31’–54’a	Muwatalli Dies; Urhi-Tessup Becomes King of Hatti (broken)
VI	§§10c–11 = iii 54’b–iv 40	The Reign of Urhi-Tessup: Conflict Between Hattusili and Urhi-Tessup; Hattusili Takes the Throne
VII	§§12a–12b = iv 41–61	Hattusili Recounts Ishtar’s Providence
VIII	§§12c–14 = iv 62–89	Decree in Honor of Ishtar of Samuha

I. The text opens with a long titulary that places Hattusili in the line of great kings of Hatti—since he provides his lineage, this conveniently omits the reign of his immediate predecessor, Urhi-Tessup, as well as that of his brother Muwatalli. After the titulary, the Autobiography opens with a line that establishes the theme of the entire text: “The providence of Ishtar I will speak” (ŠA *‘IŠTAR parā*

23. The rulings vary among witnesses in some instances; I follow the standard paragraph numbering of Otten (1981).

ḫ andandatar memaḫḫ i, i 5). As we will see in the apologetic analysis below (§4.3), Ishtar's "providence" saturates this text, justifying Hattusili every step of the way.

II. Hattusili declares himself the youngest of four children of Mursili II. Ishtar reveals to Mursili that Hattusili will not live long unless he is dedicated to her; Mursili takes her advice and dedicates his son as a *šankunni*-priest, and Hattusili lives.

III. Muwatalli invests Hattusili with the administration of the Upper Land, and Hattusili responds by driving out all his enemies with Ishtar's help. Unfortunately, to grant this office to Hattusili he first had to remove Arma-Tarhunta from the same office. The latter became jealous and launched some sort of allegation against Hattusili. Still provided for by Ishtar, Hattusili was absolved of all wrongdoing and remained in his brother's good graces.

IV. Muwatalli takes the Hittite deities and moves the capital from Hattusa in the north to Tarhuntassa in the southwest, leaving behind Hattusili to defend the northern periphery of Hatti.²⁴ Hattusili acquits himself brilliantly, driving back the Kaskaean invaders despite inferior numbers. Muwatalli rewards him with a viceroyalty centered in Hakpis; from this power base Hattusili expands Hittite territory by resettling abandoned cities, all under the providence of Ishtar. After supporting Muwatalli in Egypt,²⁵ Hattusili returns home via the city Lawazantiya and marries a priest's daughter, Pudu-Hepa, and the two have children. When his old enemy Arma-Tarhunta attacks Hattusili with sorcery, a court convicts Arma-Tarhunta along with his household. Hattusili extends mercy to Arma-Tarhunta on account of his old age but exiles his wife and an unnamed son to Cyprus.

V. This passage, lamentably the most broken in the entire Autobiography, doubtless recorded the death of Muwatalli, though the specific event is not preserved. Afterward, Hattusili installs Urhi-Tessup, Muwatalli's son via a concubine (DUMU EŠERTI, iii 41'), as king and gives him power over all Hatti (iii 42'–44').

VI. Jealous of Hattusili's successes through the providence of Ishtar, Urhi-Tessup repays his uncle's kindness by stripping him of his offices, leaving Hattusili with only Hakpis and Neriq under his control. Hattusili reluctantly accepts this for seven years out of respect for his deceased brother, but when Urhi-Tessup finishes the job by removing Hattusili's final two cities from his control, Hattusili calls him out. Allying with the disenfranchised Sipaziti, son of Arma-Tarhunta, Urhi-Tessup marches on Hattusili but suffers an ignominious defeat. Ishtar appears to Hattusili's wife in a dream and confirms that she destined him for kingship and is

24. Although most of this section narrates Hattusili's military successes following the departure of Muwatalli to Tarhuntassa, it appears that ii 16–30 presents a flashback of a victory of Hattusili prior to the relocation of the capital (V. Parker 1998, 271–75).

25. This must refer to the battle between Hatti and Egypt at Qadeš in Syria, considered part of Egypt at the time.

drawing all Hatti to support him. Hattusili demonstrates his mercy by banishing Urhi-Tessup and Sipaziti.

VII. Hattusili reemphasizes Ishtar's providence during every step of his rise from prince to great king. After he became king he continued to enjoy success, increasing the territory of Hatti and maintaining good relations with neighboring lands.

VIII. Hattusili recounts installing Kuruntiya as a vassal king in Tarhuntassa, then dedicates the confiscated household of Arma-Tarhunta to Ishtar. He dedicates his son to the service of Ishtar, just as he was dedicated to the service of Ishtar as a boy. He concludes by safeguarding Ishtar's property and exempting her personnel from obligatory service, then exhorting future rulers to revere the goddess.

4.2.2 Broad Transcription and Translation

The following is an eclectic text, since a full edition is well beyond the scope of this study. Column and line numbers follow KUB I 1. Where variants between exemplars occur, I follow KUB I 1 except where noted otherwise. For a full edition, see Heinrich Otten's tremendously useful volume, *Die Apologie Hattusilis III: Das Bild der Überlieferung* (= Otten 1981).

i 1	UMMA ^m tabarna ^m ḫ attušili LUGAL GAL LUGAL KUR ^{URU} ḫ atti
i 2	DUMU ^m muršili LUGAL GAL LUGAL KUR ^{URU} ḫ atti
i 3	DUMU.DUMU≈ŠU ŠA ^m šuppiluliuma LUGAL GAL LUGAL KUR ^{URU} ḫ atti
i 4	ŠĀ.BAL ŠA ^m ḫ attušili LUGAL ^{URU} kuššar
i 5	ŠA ^d IŠTAR parā ḫ andandatar memaḫḫ i
i 6	n≈at DUMU.NAM.LÚ.U ₁₉ LU-aš ištamašdu nu 4ziladuwa
i 7	ŠA ^d UTU-ŠI DUMU≈ŠU DUMU.DUMU≈ŠU NUMUN ^d UTU-ŠI DINGIR.MEŠ-aš≈kan ištarna
i 8	ANA ^d IŠTAR naḫ ḫ ān ēšdu
i 9	ABU≈YA-a≈nnaš≈za ^m muršiliš 4 DUMU.MEŠ ^m ḫ alpašulupin
i 10	^m NIR.GÁL-in ^m ḫ attušilin ^d DINGIR.MEŠ.IR-inn≈a DUMU.MUNUS-an
i 11	ḫ ašta nu≈za ḫ ūmandaš≈pat EGIR-izziš DUMU-aš ešun
i 12	nu≈za kuitman nūwa DUMU-aš ešun ŠA ^{KUŠ} KIR ₄ .TAB.ANŠE≈za ešun nu ^d IŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA
i 13	ANA ^m muršili ABI≈YA Ū-it ^m NIR.GÁL-in ŠEŠ≈YA
i 14	uiyat ANA ^m ḫ attušili≈wa MU.KAM.ḪI.A maninkuwanteš
i 15	UL≈war≈aš ḫ uišwannaš nu≈war≈an ammuḫ parā
i 16	pāi nu≈war≈aš≈mu ^{LU} šankunniš ešdu
i 17	nu≈war≈aš ḫ uišwanza nu≈mu ABU≈YA DUMU-an šarā dāš
i 18	nu≈mu ANA DINGIR-LIM ARAD-anni pešta nu≈za ANA DINGIR-

LIM

- i 19 ^{LÜ}šankunniyanza BAL-aḫ ḫ un
i 20 nu≈za≈kan ANA ŠU ^dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA ʿlūlu ūḫ ḫ un
i 21 nu≈mu ^dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA ŠU-za IṢ BAT n≈aš≈mu≈kan parā
ḫ andantešta
-
- i 22 maḫ ḫ an≈ma≈za ABU≈YAⁿmuršiliš DINGIR-LIM-iš kišat
i 23 ŠEŠ≈YA≈ma≈za≈kan ^mNIR.GÁL-iš ANA GIŠ.GU.ZA ABI≈ŠU ešat
i 24 ammuk≈ma≈za ANA PĀNI ŠEŠ≈YA EN KARAŠ kišḫ aḫat
i 25 nu≈mu ŠEŠ≈YA ANA GAL MEŠEDIŪTTIM tittanut
i 26 KUR UGU≈ya≈mu maniyaḫ ḫ anni pešta
i 27 nu KUR UGU-TI ʿtaparḫ a peran≈ma≈at≈mu^{md}30-^dU-aš
i 28 DUMU ^mzidā maniyaḫ ḫ iškeṇu≈mu ^dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA kuit
i 29 kaniššan ḫ arta ŠEŠ≈YA≈ya≈mu^mNIR.GÁL-iš
i 30 āššu ḫ arta nu≈mu≈kan GIM-an UN.MEŠ-annanzā²⁶
i 31 ŠA ^dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA kaniššūwar ŠA ŠEŠ≈YA≈ya
i 32 āššulan auēr nu≈mu ʿaršaniēr
i 33 [nu≈m]u²⁷ ^{md}30-^dU-aš DUMU ^mzidā namma≈ya damāuš UN.MEŠ-uš
i 34 uwāi tiškeuwan tiēr nu≈mu≈kan ḫ ūwapper
i 35 nu≈mu ʿarpašatta≈[pat nu]≈mu ŠEŠ≈YA ^mNIR.GÁL-iš
i 36 ANA ^{GIŠ}UMBIN²⁸ lamniyat ^dIŠTAR≈ma≈mu GAŠAN≈YA Ū-at
i 37 nu≈mu Ū-it kī memišta DINGIR-LIM-ni≈wa≈tta
i 38 ammuk tarnaḫ ḫ i nu≈wa lē naḫ ti
i 39 nu DINGIR-LIM-za parkūēššun nu≈mu DINGIR-LUM kuit
GAŠAN≈YA ŠU-za ḫ arta
i 40 nu≈mu ʿḫ ūwappi DINGIR-LIM-ni ʿḫ ūwappi Dlešni
i 41 parā UL kuwapikki tarnaš UL≈ma≈mu
i 42 ^{GIŠ}TUKUL ^{LÜ}KŪR kuwapikki šer waḫ nut
i 43 ^dIŠTAR≈mu≈za≈kan GAŠAN≈YA ḫ ūmandaza≈pat dašket
i 44 mān≈mu ištarakzi kuwapi nu≈za≈kan ʿirmalaš≈pat
i 45 ŠA DINGIR-LIM ḫ andandatar šer uškenun
i 46 DINGIR-LUM≈mu GAŠAN≈YA ḫ ūmandaza≈pat ŠU-za ḫ arta
ammuk≈ma≈za
i 47 parā ḫ andānza kuit UN-aš ešun

26. Reading -an-na-an-za with KBo III 6 i 26 rather than -an-na-za with KUB I 1 i 30.

27. Otten indicates that the entirety of nu≈mu at the beginning of this line is preserved (1981, 6); he does not specify where and I cannot locate the signs on any extant fragment.

28. ABoT I 62 i 31 reads ^dUMB[IN], which may be a meaningful variant. Puhvel writes, “the probably sacral symbolism of *hurki*- [the Hittite word underlying UMBIN] is underlined by the divine determinative” (HED H: 400 sub *hurki*-); cf. Archi 2000, 18.

- i 48 ANA PĀNI DINGIR.MEŠ *kuit parā h andandanni iyahh at*
i 49 ŠA DUMU.NAM.LÚ.U₁₉.LU-ŪTTI ĤUL-lu *uttar UL kuwapikki*
i 50 [i]yanun DINGIR-LUM≈mu≈za≈kan GAŠAN≈YA h *ūmandaza≈pat*
daškeši
i 51 UL *ēšta nu≈mu* DINGIR-LUM GAŠAN≈YA *kuwayami meh uni*
i 52 UL *kuwapikki šer tiyat ANA LÚKÚR≈mu*
i 53 *peran katta UL kuwapikki tarnaš*
i 54 UL≈ma≈mu ANA EN DĪNIYA LÚ.MEŠ *aršanatallaš*
i 55 *kuwapikki peran katta tarnaš măn≈aš INIM LÚKÚR*
i 56 *măn≈aš EN DĪNI măn≈aš INIM É LUGAL kuiški*
i 57 *nu≈mu dIŠTAR≈pat GAŠAN≈YA h ūmandaza ku palahšan UGU h arta*
i 58 *h ūmandaza≈pat≈mu≈kan dašket^{LÚ}KÚR.MEŠ≈mu≈kan*
i 59 LÚ.MEŠ *aršanatalluš dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA ŠU-i dāiš*
i 60 *n≈aš≈za kattan arh a zenna h h un*
-
- i 61 GIM-an≈ma≈kan ŠEŠ≈YA mNIR.GÁL *uttar katta aušta*
i 62 *nu≈mu≈kan ĤUL-lu uttar katta UL kuitki āšta*
i 63 *nu≈mu EGIR-pa dāš nu≈mu≈kan KARAŠ ANŠE.KUR.RA.MEŠ*
i 64 ŠA KUR URU h *atti ŠU-i dāiš nu KARAŠ*
i 65 ANŠE.KUR.RA.MEŠ ŠA KUR URU h *atti h ūmandan ammu ku taparlu*
i 66 *nu≈mu≈za ŠEŠ≈YA mNIR.GÁL parā uišket nu≈mu dIŠTAR*
GAŠAN≈YA
i 67 GIM-an *kaniššan h arta nu≈za≈kan IGI.Ĥ.A-wa kuwattan*
i 68 ANA KUR LÚKÚR *andan nāiškenun nu≈mu≈kan IGI.Ĥ.A-wa LÚKÚR*
i 69 EGIR-pa UL *kuiški nāiš nu≈za KUR.KUR.MEŠ LÚKÚR taru h h iškenun*
i 70 *kaniššuwar≈ma≈mu ŠA dIŠTAR≈pat GAŠAN≈YA ēšta*
i 71 *nu≈kan ŠA KUR.KUR.MEŠ URU h atti^{LÚ}KÚR kuiš kuiš anda ēšta*
i 72 *n≈an≈kan IŠTU KUR.KUR URU h atti arh a≈pat uīyanun*
i 73 *kuitman≈ma≈za DUMU-aš ešun nu≈za KUR.KUR LÚKÚR kue*
taru h h iškenun
i 74 *n≈at T UPPU h anti DŪmi n≈at PĀNI DINGIR-LIM te h h i*
-
- i 75 GIM-an≈ma ŠEŠ≈YA mNIR.GÁL-iš IŠTU AMĀT DINGIR-LIM-ŠU
i 76 INA KUR ŠAPLĪTI *katta pait URU h attušan≈ma arh a tarnaš*
ii 1 *nu [ŠEŠ-YA DINGIR.MEŠ] URUKÛ.BABBAR-TI GIDIM.ĤI.A≈ya šarā*
dāš
ii 2 *n≈aš INA KUR URU [ŠAPLĪTI katta p]ēdaš EGIR-az≈ma*
ii 3 KUR URU *gašga.ĤI.A h ūmanteš KUR [p]išturu KUR daištapašša*
ii 4 BAL-iyat *nu KUR [išt upitt] KUR URU marišta²⁹*

29. Reading *ma-ri-iš-ta* with KBo III 6 i 69 rather than *ma-ri-ka-ta* with KUB I 1 ii 4.

- ii 5 URU.DIDLI.ĪI.A BÂD≈*ya ar*[*h a dāer*] *nu≈kan*^{LÚ}KÚR ^{1D}*marāššandan*
ii 6 *zā*[*iš*] *nu* KUR ^{URU}*kaneš walaḥ h eškeuwan dāiš*
ii 7 [...] *walhanniškeuwan dāiš*
ii 8 ^{URU}*h a*[...^{URU}]*kuruštamaš URU gazziurašš≈a*
ii 9 *pedi kururiyaḥ h er nu* URU DÜĪI.A ^{URU}*h atti*
ii 10 *walhiškeuwan tiēr* ^{LÚ}KÚR KUR ^{URU}*durmitta≈ma*
ii 11 [KUR ^{URU}*tu*]*h uppiya walḥa[n]niškeuwan dāiš*
ii 12 [(...)] KUR *ippaššana≈ma dannattan ēšta*
ii 13 [(...) *pa*]*rā INA* KUR ^{URU}*šuwadara ārašket*
ii 14 [^{URU}*h akpišš*]*aš≈ma≈kan URU ištaḥ arašš≈a 2-ēl išparzer*
ii 15 [...] -*TIM ištappan ēšta nu≈šmaš INA* MU.10.KAM
ii 16 NUMUN *UL annešker parā≈ma* MU.KAM.ĪI.A *kuedaš*
ii 17 ŠEŠ≈*YA* ^mNIR.GÁL-*iš INA* KUR ^{URU}*h atti ēšta*
ii 18 *nu* KUR ^{URU}*gašga.ĪI.A h ūmanteš kururiyaḥḥ er*
ii 19 *nu* KUR ^{URU}*šadduppa* KUR ^{URU}*dankuwa≈ya arḥ a h arganuer*
ii 20 *INA URU pittiyariga≈ma kattan dāiš nu≈mu* ŠEŠ≈*YA* ^mNIR.GÁL-*iš*
ii 21 *uiyat* ERIM.MEŠ≈*ma≈mu ANŠE.KUR.RA.MEŠ tepauwaz paiš*
ii 22 *nu≈za* ERIM.MEŠ NĀRĀRU³⁰ ŠA KUR-TI *tepuwaza GAM-an ēppūn*
ii 23 *nu pāun nu≈kan* ^{LÚ}KÚR *INA URU h aḥḥ a damaššun*
ii 24 *n≈an zaḥ h iyanun nu≈mu*¹Š³¹STAR¹ GAŠAN≈*YA peran h ūwaiš*
ii 25 *n≈an h ulliyanun nu* ŠU-*ar*² *uedaḥ h un*
ii 26 ^{URU}*h attušan≈ma kuin pē h arta n≈an≈kan arḥ a*
ii 27 *daḥ h un n≈an h ūmandan* EGIR-*pa ašešanunun*
ii 28 ^{LÚ}.MEŠ *peran h ūiyatalluš≈ma ēppūn*
ii 29 *n≈aš ANA* ŠEŠ-*YA h inkun nu≈mu ki* IGI-*zi LÚtar≈mit*
ii 30 ^dŠ³²STAR≈*mu≈kan* GAŠAN≈*YA IGI-zi palši* ŠUM-*an*³³ *kēdani KASKAL-*

30. We expect the genitive NĀRĀRI “auxiliary [troops]” here; to reflect the nominative I translate the term appositionally, “the troops, the help of the land.”

31. The text reads ^dGAŠAN GAŠAN≈YA “the divine Lady, my lady”; this must be a mistake (anticipatory dittography?) since ^dŠ³¹STAR GAŠAN≈YA occurs so frequently in the text. This sign appears in only one exemplar of the text (KBo III 6 ii 9).

32. Like nearly every other editor of this text, I translate this tentatively as “*stela*”; cf. HZL: 123 sign 68–ŠU “Siegesdenkmal?” (transcribing ŠU.AN); HHw: 225 “Siegesdenkmal” (transcribing ŠU.AN); COS 1.77:201 “monument(?)” etc. I differ slightly from HZL and HHw in treating the AN sign not as part of the Sumerogram but as a phonetic complement, representing Hittite *kiššeran* (GHL §4.82), lit. “hand”; see also ii 44 below. For more on this interesting writing—which is preserved here only in KBo III 6 ii 10, but later in the text in both KUB I 1 ii 44 and KBo III 6 ii 26, and thus cannot be simply a scribal error—see Wolf 1967, 52–53.

33. Reading ŠUM-*an* with KUB I 2 ii 17 rather than ŠUMUM with KBo III 6 ii 14. Oddly,

ši ḫ alzāiš

-
- ii 31 *uet≈ma* ^{LÚ}KÚR ^{URU}pišḫ uru³⁴ *anda āraš* ^{URU}karahḫ nāš]š≈a
 ii 32 ^{URU}marištaš ŠÀ ^{LÚ}KÚR «NI NI nu≈šši apēz KUR ^{URU}taqqaštaš»³⁵ ZAG-aš
ēšta
 ii 33 *kezza≈ma≈šši* ^{URU}talmaliyaš ZAG-aš *ēšta*
 ii 34 ANŠE.KUR.RA.MEŠ≈ma 8 ME Š IMDUM *ēšta* ERIM.MEŠ-TI≈ma≈kan
 ii 35 *kappuwauwar UL ēšta ammuk≈ma ŠEŠ≈YA* ^mNIR.GÁL-iš
 ii 36 *uiyat nu≈mu* 1 ME 20 Š IMDUM ANŠE.KUR.RA.MEŠ *pešta*
 ii 37 ERIM.MEŠ-az≈ma≈mu 1 LÚ≈ya GAM-an UL *ēšta nu≈mu apiya≈ya*
 ii 38 ^dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA *peran ḫ ūwaiš nu≈za apiya≈ya* ^{LÚ}KÚR
 ii 39 *IŠTU NÍ.TE-YA taruḫ ḫ un LÚEUM≈ma kuiš peran ḫ ūiyanza*
 ii 40 *ēšta*³⁶ *n≈an≈kan* GIM-an *kuenun*
 ii 41 ^{LÚ}KÚR≈ma≈za *piddāit* URU.DIDLI.ḪI.A≈ma *kuiēš ŠA KUR* ^{URU}ḫ *atti*
 ii 42 *ištappanteš ešer nu≈kan* GUL-ḫ *ešker*
 ii 43 *nu* ^{LÚ}KÚR *ḫ ulliškeuwan tiēr*
 ii 44 ŠU-an≈ma INA ^{URU}uištauwanda *uedaḫ ḫ un*
 ii 45 *nu≈mu apiya≈ya ŠA* ^dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA *kaneššūwar ēšta*
 ii 46 ^{GIŠ}TUKUL≈ma *kuin apiya ḫ arkun n≈an ḫ ališšiyānun*
 ii 47 *n≈an ANA DINGIR-LIM GAŠAN≈YA peran teḫ ḫ un*
-
- ii 48 *nu≈mu ŠEŠ-YA* ^mNIR.GÁL EGIR-*anda uet nu* ^{URU}anziliyan
 ii 49 ^{URU}tapiqqann≈a *uetet n≈aš arḫ a≈pat pait*
 ii 50 *maninkuwann≈aš≈mu UL≈pat uet* ERIM.MEŠ≈ya≈za ANŠE.KUR.
 RA.MEŠ
 ii 51 ŠA KUR ^{URU}ḫ *atti peran ḫ ūinut n≈an arḫ a pēḫtet*
-

most commentators ignore the reading in KUB I 2, despite the fact that it makes perfect sense and is a well-attested writing of this word (neuter accusative singular of Hittite *laman*; see CHD L-N: 31–36), and stick with the reading of KBo III 6, which is counterintuitive, unique, and written over an erasure in the text. In early Hittite texts some Akkadographic writings preserve mimation (Weeden 2011, 12); this could be a vestige of this tradition as most commentators seem to hold, but its appearance here is surprising.

34. The grammar of this GN is obscure; del Monte and Tischler note that with Pishuru, “Alle Belege erscheinen als attributive Adjektive zu vorhergehendem ^{LÚ}KÚR = *kurur-*” (RGTC 6:317 sub *Pišḫ urī*).

35. These signs appear in KBo III 6 ii 16–17 but are missing in KUB I 1 ii 32. Otten explains, “Das Expl. B (II 16) deutet hier eine Lücke im Verständnis der Vorlage an, indem es zweimal die gekreuzten Keile für ‘zerstört’ einsetzt. Dieser in der Vorlage verderbte Text ware demnach etwa im Expl. A durch Weglassen der betr. Stelle geglättet worden” (1981, 37).

36. KBo III 6 ii 23 seems to omit about half a line from the text in KUB I 1 ii 40; since the omitted text is entirely in a lacuna in KUB I, this edition follows KBo III 6.

- ii 52 *namma≈kan* DINGIR.MEŠ^{URU} *h* *atti* GIDIM.Ḫ.A≈*ya* *pedi* *ninikta*
ii 53 *n≈aš* INA^{URU} ^dU-*ašša* *katta* *pēdaš* *nu* ^{URU} ^dU-*aššan* *uetet*³⁷
ii 54 ^{URU} *durmitta≈ma≈aš* ^{URU} *kuruštama* UL *pait*
ii 55 *n≈ašta* *kēdaš* ANA KUR.KUR.MEŠ *ammuk* *anda* *dāliyat*
ii 56 *nu≈mu* *kē* KUR.KUR.MEŠ *dannatta* AŠŠUM MU'IRDÜTTIM *pešta*
ii 57 KUR^{URU} *išh* *upitta* KUR^{URU} *marišta* KUR^{URU} *h* *iššašhapa*
ii 58 KUR^{URU} *katapa* KUR^{URU} *h* *anḫana* KUR^{URU} *darah* *na* KUR^{URU} *h* *attena*
ii 59 KUR^{URU} *durmitta* KUR^{URU} *palā* KUR^{URU} *tūmanna*
ii 60 KUR^{URU} *gaššiya* KUR^{URU} *šappa* KUR^{IP} *SÍG* ANŠE.KUR.RA.MEŠ
^{LÜ}.MEŠ⁷ *KUŠ*.GUŠKIN≈*ya*
ii 61 *h* *ūmandan* *ammuk* *ˁtaparḫa* KUR^{URU} *h* *akpišša≈ma≈mu*
ii 62 KUR^{URU} *ištaḫ* *ara≈ya* IR-*anni* *pešta* *nu≈mu* INA KUR^{URU} *h* *akpišša*
ii 63 LUGAL-un *iyat* *nu≈mu≈kan* ŠEŠ≈YA *kue* *kē* KUR.KUR.MEŠ *ˁdannatta*
ii 64 ŠU-i *dāiš* *nu≈mu* ^dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA *kuit* ŠU-*za* *h* *arta*
ii 65 *nu≈za* ^{LÜ}KUR.MEŠ *kuiēš* *taruḫ* *h* *un* *kuiēš≈ma≈mu* *takšulāer*
ii 66 *nu≈mu* ^dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA GAM-an *tiyat* *nu≈za* *kē* KUR.KUR.MEŠ
^ˁ*dannatta*
ii 67 IŠTU NÍ.TE-YA EGIR-*pa* *ašešanunun*
ii 68 *n≈at* EGIR-*pa* ^{URU} *h* *attušan* *ianun*
ii 69 GIM-an≈*ma* *uet* ŠEŠ≈YA *kuwapi* INA KUR *mizri* *pait*
ii 70 *nu≈za* KUR.KUR.MEŠ *kue* *kē* EGIR-*pa* *ašešanunun* *nu* KARAŠ ANŠE.
KUR.RA.MEŠ
ii 71 *kēl* ŠA KUR-TI ANA ŠEŠ≈YA *lah* *h* *i* INA KUR *mizri*
ii 72 GAM-an *pēḫ* *utenun* *nu≈mu≈kan* PĀNI ŠEŠ-YA *kuit* KARAŠ
ii 73 ANŠE.KUR.RA.MEŠ ŠA KUR^{URU} *h* *atti* ŠU-i *ēšta*
ii 74 *n≈an* *ammuk* *ˁtaparḫ* *a* GIM-an≈*ma≈mu≈kan*^{md30} ^dU-*aš* DUMU
^m*zidā*
ii 75 ŠA ^dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA U ŠA ŠEŠ≈YA≈*ya* *āššulan* *aušta*
ii 76 *nu≈šmaš≈kan* UL *kuēzqa* *kuit* *h* *aptat*
ii 77 *nu≈mu≈za* *alwanzaḫ* *h* *ūwanzi* *nanna* QADU DAMŠU DUMU≈ŠU
ii 78 *ēpper* ^{URU} *šamuḫ* *ann≈a* URU-LUM DINGIR-LIM *alwanzešnaza*
ii 79 *šer* *šunništa* GIM-an≈*ma* IŠTU KUR *mizri*
ii 80 EGIR-*pa* *iyah* *h* *ghat* *nu* INA^{URU} *lawazantiya*
ii 81 ANA DINGIR-LIM BAL-uwanzi *iyah* *h* *ghat*
ii 82 *nu≈za* DINGIR-LUM³⁸ *ianun*

37. Reading *uetet* with KBo III 6 ii 34 rather than *ēpta* with KUB I 1 ii 53. It is difficult to understand why Muwatalli would take the gods and go “seize” a new city; I suspect this oddity lies behind the variant in KBo III 6.

38. This is an odd use of DINGIR-LUM to signify the accusative; elsewhere in the text

- iii 1 [nu]≈za DUMU.MUNUS ^mpentipšarri ^{LU}SANGA ʿpudu-ḫ epan
 iii 2 [IŠTU] INIM DINGIR-LIM DAM-anni dah ḫ un nu ḫ andāuen
 iii 3 [nu≈nn]aš DINGIR-LUM ŠA ^{LU}MUDI D[AM] āššiyatar pešta
 iii 4 nu≈n[n]aš DUMU.NITA.MEŠ DUMU.MUNUS.MEŠ iyau[e]n
 namma≈mu DINGIR-LUM GAŠAN≈YA Û-at
 iii 5 [QADU] É-TI≈wa¹³⁹≈mu ÌR-aḫ ḫ ut nu ANA DINGIR-LIM QADU
 É-TIYA
 iii 6 [ÌR-aḫ]ḫ qḫat nu≈nnaš É-er kuit ēššūen
 iii 7 nu≈nnaš≈kan DINGIR-LUM anda artat nu≈nnaš É-er parā
 iii 8 [iyan]niš kaniššūwar≈ma≈at ŠA ^dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA ēšta
 iii 9 [nu pāun] ^{URU}ḫ awarkinan^{URU} delmunann≈a
 iii 10 [ued]aḫ ḫ uḫ^{URU}ḫ akpiššaš≈ma kuru[r]yaḫ ta
 iii 11 ^{LUMES}gašga.ḪI.A uiyanun n≈an IŠTU NÍ.TE-YA SIG₅-aḫ ḫ un
 iii 12 [nu≈za ammu]uk LUGAL KUR ^{URU}ḫ akpiš kišḫaḫa[t]⁴⁰ MUNUS-
 TUM≈ma≈za
 iii 13 [MUNUS.LUGAL⁴¹ KUR ^{UR}]ḫ akpiš kištat⁴²
-
- iii 14 mah ḫ an≈ma uet IŠTU É LUGAL DI-eššar kuitki EGIR-pa
 iii 15 ḫ uittiyattat nu≈za^dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA parā ḫ andandatar
 iii 16 apēdani≈ya meḫ uni tikkuššanut [n]u ḫ annišnanza
 iii 17 DI-eššar EGIR-pa pēḫ utet nu≈kan ANA^marma-^dU⁴³ QADU DAM≈ŠU
 DUMU.MEŠ≈ŠU
 iii 18 alwanzatar uemīer n≈at≈šiy≈at peran katta tier

DINGIR-LUM consistently represents the nominative.

39. The text (only preserved in KUB I 1) has UD, missing the final horizontal wedge of WA.

40. The first sign of this word resembles DI rather than KI in KUB I 1 iii 12, the only place it is preserved.

41. This reconstruction is an attempt at reconciling the various fragmentary exemplars. Fragment 1304/u, the join to KUB I 1, preserves MUNUS-TUM≈ma≈za at the end of iii 12; the beginning of iii 13 is not preserved (cf. Otten 1981, pl. 1). But KUB I 7 i' 8', which Otten suggests is part of the KBo III 6 exemplar at the end of column ii, preserves MUNUS.LUGAL≈ma≈za; the preceding and following text is missing. The fragmentary nature of all the exemplars prevents a firm master text, but my reconstruction here is quite feasible, and in any event, the meaning is clear.

42. Otten translates this in the second person: “du, die Frau aber, wurdest [Königin von] Hakis” (1981, 17). I translate in the third person, however. Although *kištat* is unattested as a third-person form, the suffix *-tat* appears consistently as a medio-passive preterite third-person singular suffix in later texts, see *GHL* §§11.17, 14.2. See also Neumann 1985, 292.

43. This is preserved only in KUB XIX 67 i 6, and it aids our understanding of the name of Hattusili's nemesis. In KUB I 1 and KBo III 6 the name is consistently spelled ^d30-^dU, but here the first theophoric is spelled phonetically, ^dar-ma-^dU.

- iii 19 *nu URU-LUM DINGIR-LIM* ≈ *YA* ^{URU} *šamuḫ an alwanzešnaza šunnaš*
 iii 20 *n* ≈ *an* ≈ *mu* DINGIR-LUM GAŠAN ≈ *YA katterraḫ taŠEŠ* ≈ *YA* ≈ *ya* ≈ *an* ≈ *mu*
 iii 21 QADU DAM ≈ ŠU DUMU. «MEŠ» ≈ ŠU «Ē ≈ ŠU»⁴⁴ *peran nāiš nu* ≈ *mu*
 ŠEŠ ≈ *YA*
 iii 22 *memišta* ^mšippa-LÚ-iš ≈ *wa* ≈ *kan* UL *anda nu* ≈ *mu* ŠEŠ ≈ *YA* *kuit*
 iii 23 [^{md}30-^dIŠ]KUR-*an* DI-ešnaz šarāzziyaḫ *ta*
 iii 24 *nu* ≈ šši ≈ *kan* i[*da*]lāuwanni EGIR-*pa* UL [*n*]amma maušḫ aḫat
 iii 25 *nu* ≈ *mu* ^marma-^dU-aš [*k*]uit iṣḫ anaš antuḫšaš ēšta namma ≈ aš^{LÚ} ŠU.GI-
 anza
 iii 26 ēšta [*n*] ≈ aš ≈ *mu* ≈ *kan* uwayattat [*n*] ≈ *an* arḫ a dāliyanun
 iii 27 ^mšippa-LÚ-i[*nn* ≈ *a* DUMU] ≈ ŠU arḫ a dāliyanun *n* ≈ aš UL *kuitki*
 iii 28 DÛ-nun⁴⁵ [AŠŠA]T ^marma-^dIŠKUR ≈ *ma* DUMU ≈ ŠU ≈ *ya* [INA]
^{URU} alašiya
 iii 29 uppaḫ ḫ un [Ē ≈ ŠU ≈ *m*]a takša[*n*] šarran šarā dḫḫ un
 iii 30⁴⁶ *n* ≈ *an* ANA ^{md}30-^dU EGIR-*pa* parā peḫ ḫ un
 iii 31' [*nu* ≈ *mu* ≈ *kan* ŠEŠ] ≈ *YA* *kuit* ^mNIR.GÁL-iš⁴⁷ [...]
 iii 32' [... ^{URU}]durmittan [...]
 iii 33' [... ^{URU}]zip[lantan KUR ^{URU}ḫ aḫtena KUR ḫ a[*k*]piššan
 iii 34' ^{URU}iš[taḫ aran (...) ÌR-anni pi]an ḫ arta⁴⁸
 iii 35' [... dann]atta EGIR-*pa* ašešanunun

44. This section is preserved fragmentarily in three exemplars, and none of the three agree. My transcription is an attempt at reconciling them as well as possible. The following appears in each:

KUB I 1 iii 21	[...] ≈ ŠU DUMU ≈ ŠU pé-ra-an
KUB I 7 i' 16'	[...] ≈ ŠU DAM.MEŠ ≈ ŠU DUMU.MEŠ ≈ ŠU pé-ra-an
KUB XIX 67 i' 11–12	QA-DU DAM ≈ ŠU DUMU.MEŠ ≈ ŠU Ē ≈ ŠU pé-ra-an

45. Reading DÛ-nu-un with KUB I 7 i' 22' rather than *da-a-li-ya-nu-un* with KUB XIX 67 i' 23.

46. iii 30'–39' is the most broken section of the entire text, which is unfortunate because it presumably covers the death of Muwatalli (see p. 146 n. 49) and the continuation of hostilities between Hattusili and Arma-Tarhunta. The preserved portions appear in KUB XIX 64 lines 2'–10', KUB I 7 ii' 1–7, and 922/v (Otten 1981, pl. IV) lines 2'–8'; a few scattered signs also appear in KUB I 1 iii 34' and KUB XIX 67 i' 28–33.

47. It is strange that the *kuit* intrudes between [ŠEŠ] ≈ *YA* and ^mNIR.GÁL-iš here. Perhaps the *YA* is an element of another word, and ŠEŠ ≈ *YA* should be reconstructed after ^mNIR.GÁL-iš.

48. The preserved signs at first glance suggest that Muwatalli held on to (ḫ arta) these cities, but with most commentators, I treat ḫ arta as an auxiliary verb functioning in an analytic perfect construction (see *GHL* §§22.19–23). The preceding sign AN, suggesting a neuter nominative-accusative participle, recommends this interpretation.

- iii 36' [...] *kišat*⁴⁹ *nu* [^{URU}*h* *attū*š*an* *kuit* [...]]
 iii 37' [...] *ammuk* 4*t* *apar*h *a nu*≈*mu*≈*za*≈*kan* [...] EN-*anni*
 iii 38' [...] *nišket ammuk*≈*ma* ŠA [...]
 iii 39' [...] *h antaš UL manqa* [*īyanur*]
 iii 40' [*k*ē*zza*≈*ma* *ma*h [*h a*h ANA ŠEŠ≈YA⁵⁰ [(ŠA DAM≈ŠU⁵¹)]⁵¹
*h ūi*hušš*uw*q*l*iš⁵² DUMU-*aš*
 iii 41' U[L ēš]*ta nu* ^m*ur*h *i*⁴U-*upan* DUMU EŠERTI
 iii 42' šarā *da*h [*h*]*un n*≈*an* I[NA] KUR ^{URU}KÙ.BABBAR-*ti*
 iii 43' EN-*anni* [...] *h ūmandan*
 iii 44' ŠU-*i* *te*h *h un n*≈*aš* ANA KUR.KUR.MEŠ [...] ēš*ta*
 iii 45' *ammuk*≈*ma*≈*za* LUGAL [^U]^{RU}*h* *akpišša* qš*un nu* IŠTU KARASŠ
 iii 46' ANŠE.KUR.RA.[MEŠ ...] *nu* ^{URU}*ne*[*r*]iq[*q*]*aš*
 iii 47' *kuit* IŠTU [Ū]*M* ^m*h* *antili ar*ha *h arganza* ēš*ta*
 iii 48' *n*≈*an* EGIR-*pa ue*[*da*h]*h un* KUR.KUR.MEŠ≈*ya kue* INA^{URU}*neriq*
 iii 49' *ara*h *zanda* ēš*ta* [^{URU}]*nēran* ^{URU}*h* *aštiran*
 iii 50' ZAG-*an* [*i*]*yan*[*un*⁵³ *n*]≈*at*≈*za* *h ūman* [ĪR]-*a*h*h un*

49. Most translators reconstruct [ŠEŠ≈YA DINGIR-LIM-*iš*] *kišat* (“[my brother] became [a god]”) here. This is extremely likely, especially given the verb *kiš-* which is often used in this phrase (cf. i 22 above), but I prefer to leave it unreconstructed for fear of building too great an argument upon a reconstruction.

50. This section is preserved fragmentarily in two exemplars, but the two cannot be reconciled perfectly:

KUB I 7 ii' 9: [...] -*ez-ma* A-NA ŠEŠ≈YA

KUB XIX 64 i' 11': [...] -*e-ez-za-ma ma-a*h -[...]

51. With the state of preservation of the text, there may or may not be room for more signs here. A feasible restoration would be ŠA DAM≈ŠU since whatever the following *h ūi*hušš*uw*q*l*iš means, it clearly contrasts the uxorial children of Muwatalli with Urhi-Tessup, the son of a concubine. A nearly duplicate text of Hattusili includes these words: *nu* ANA ŠEŠ≈YA *kuit* ŠA DAM≈ŠU [*h ū*]*h* *uiššuwališ*/ DUMU-*aš nāui kuiški* ēš*ta* (KUB 21.15 + 760/v i 6'–7'). See Košak 1996, 95–96.

52. For a survey of the attestations of this word and a demonstration that previous editors introduced the ghost word *ša*h *ui*hušš*uw*ali- into this line, see Košak 1996. I tentatively translate “adult” with Singer (2001, 403), in contrast to the majority of previous translators who opt for “legitimate.” This is a critical term for interpreting Hattusili's apology, and I treat it much more fully in Knapp 2015; in this volume see §4.3 pp. 151–52 n. 95.

53. Reading the better preserved DŪ-*n*[*u-un*] with KUB XXXI 13 line 9' rather than [*i*]-*ya*-[*nu-un*] with KUB XIX 63 line 1'.

- iii 51' [n≈at≈za] *arkammanalliu*[š⁵⁴ (...) ^{HUR.SAG}]*h aḥarwaš≈za≈kaṣ*⁵⁵
 iii 52' [^{ID}] *marasšandaš≈a* [(...) *ku*] *it IŠTU* ^{URU} *neri*[q]
 iii 53' [U] *IŠTU* ^{URU} *h akpišš*a *damaššan* [*h arkaṣ*]⁵⁶ *nu≈za h ūmandan*
 iii 54' *ĪR-aḥ h un GIM-an≈ma≈mu≈kaṣur**h i*^{dU} *uppaš eniš[š]an*
 iii 55' [ŠA DINGIR-LIM]⁵⁷ *āššulan aušta n≈aš≈mu aršaniyat*
 iii 56' [*nu*]≈*mu uwāi* [...] *aš*⁵⁸ *nu≈mu≈kan LÚ.MEŠ MUIRTŪTI h ūmanteš*
 iii 57' *arḥ a dāš* ^{UR}[*Ušamuḥ an*] *n≈a≈mu≈kan arḥ a dāš*⁵⁹ *KUR.KUR.MEŠ≈ya*
dannatta ammuK EGIR-pa
 iii 58' *ašešanunun nu≈mu≈kan apē≈ya h ūmar[da] arḥ a dāš*
 iii 59' *nu≈mu tepnut* ^{URU} *h akpiššan≈ma≈mu≈kan IŠTU INIM DINGIR-LIM*
 iii 60' *arḥ a UL dāš ANA*^{dU} ^{URU} *neriqqa≈za [kuit]* ^{LÚ} *SANGA ešun*
 iii 61' *n≈an≈mu≈kan apēzza arḥ a UL dāš*⁶⁰ *nu Š[A] ŠEŠ≈YA*
 iii 62' *nakkiyanni h andaš UL manqa DŪnun [n]u INA MU.7.KAM*
daḥ ušiyaḥḥ a
 iii 63' *apāš≈ma≈mu h arkannā*⁶¹ *IŠTU INIM DINGIR-LIM U IŠTU INIM LÚ*
šanaḥ ta
 iii 64' *nu≈mu≈kan* ^{URU} *h akpiššan*^{URU} *neriqqann≈a arḥ a dāš*
 iii 65' *nu UL namma daḥ ušiyaḥḥ a nu≈šši kururiyaḥ h un*
 iii 66' *kururiyaḥ h un≈ma≈šši GIM-an nu apāt papratar UL DŪnun*

54. Either the accusative singular (*arkammanallin*) or a verbal form is expected here; the accusative plural *arkammanalliuš* conflicts with the consistent treatment of “lands” as a collective elsewhere in the passage.

55. Reading *-wa-aš-za-* with KUB XIX 65 line 11' rather than *-wa-za-* (without the nominative case ending) with KUB I 1 iii 51'.

56. Otten reads the entire word *h arkeras* being preserved, though he does not specify where (1981, 20). I presume he refers to a combination of KUB XXXI 13 line 12' and KUB I 1 iii 53', but I think the traces are not clear enough to ascertain the reading. I cannot find these signs preserved on any other fragment.

57. Otten indicates that ŠA DINGIR-LIM is mostly preserved (1981, 20); he does not specify where and I cannot locate the signs on any extant fragment.

58. One would expect something like *uwāi tiškeuwan tiyat* here (cf. i 34), but there is not enough room. The *u-wa-a-i* extant in KUB XXXI 13 line 14' and KUB XIX 63 line 56' does strongly suggest some form of the verb *uwaya-* “harm,” however.

59. The phrase “and [Samuha] also he took away from me” is omitted from the A exemplar (KUB I 1+) but is extant in the other preserved exemplars, B (KBo III 6+) and E (KUB XIX 65+).

60. This word is preserved only in KUB XXVI iii' 61', where there is a sandhi writing for *da-a-*; only one vertical wedge serves both to finish the DA sign and begin the A sign.

61. The form *h arkannais* unclear; following *GHL* §25.16, I treat it as an infinitive from *h arganu-* “destroy.” I read the first sign *ḪAR* with KUB XIX 70 iii' 30' rather than *AḪ* with KUB I 6 iii' 9'.

- iii 67' *n≈an≈kan ANA* ^{GIS}GIGIR *waqqariyanun našma≈an≈kan ŠÀ É-TI*
 iii 68' *waqqariyanun LÚ-nili≈šši watarnaḥ ḥ un* [šulliyat≈wa≈mu≈kan]⁶²
 iii 69' *nu≈wa≈za zik LUGAL GAL ammuk≈ma≈wa≈kan 1-EN ḪALŠ I kuin*
 iii 70' *daliyat nuwa≈za ŠA 1-EN ḪALŠ I LUGAL-uš nu≈wa eḥ u*
 iii 71' *nu≈wa≈nnaš* ^dIŠTAR ^{URU}šamuḥ ^adU ^{URU}neriqqa≈ya
 iii 72' *[ḥ a]nnešša⁶³ ḥ annanzi nu ANA^murḥ i^dU-up kuwapi*
 iii 73' *eniššan ḥ atreškenun nu măn kiššan kuiš^k⁶⁴*
 iii 74' *memai annišan≈war≈an LUGAL-iznanni kuwat*
 iii 75' *tittanut kinuna≈wa≈šši kūrur kuwat ḥ atreškeši*
 iii 76' *măn≈war≈aš≈mu≈kan šulliyat kuwapi UL*
 iii 77' *măn ḥ andan LUGAL GAL ANA LUGAL TUR⁵ katterraḥ ḥ er*
 iii 78' *kinuna≈aš≈mu≈kan šulliyat kuit n≈an≈mu*
 iii 79' *DINGIR.MEŠ DI-ešnaza katterraḥ ḥ er*
 iv 1 *nu≈šši GIM-an kē INIM.MEŠ watarnaḥ ḥ un*
 iv 2 *eḥ u≈«w⁶⁶ apāš≈ma≈kan* ^{URU}marāššantiya≈za *arḥ a parašta*
 iv 3 *n≈aš INA KUR UGU-TI uet* ^mšipa-LÚ-išš≈a≈šši DUMU ^{md}30-^dU
 iv 4 *GAM-an ēšta n≈an≈kan ANA ERIM.MEŠ KUR UGU-TI ueriyat*
 iv 5 *^mšipa-LÚ-iš≈ma ammuk IGI-anda idaluš kuit ēšta*
 iv 6 *UL≈aš≈mu IGI-anda* ⁴marḥ *at⁶⁷*

 iv 7 *ammuk≈ma LUGAL-ŪTTA* ^dIŠTAR *GAŠAN≈YA annišan≈pat kuit*
 iv 8 *memišket nu apēdani meḥ un* ^dIŠTAR *GAŠAN≈YA*
 iv 9 *ANA DAM≈YA Ū-at ANA* ^{LÚ}MUDI≈KA≈wa *ammuk*
 iv 10 *peran* ⁴ḥ *ūiyami nu≈wa≈za≈kan* ^{URU}KÛ.BABBAR-aš *ḥ ūmanza*

62. Otten indicates that this entire word is preserved (1981, 22), but I cannot locate the ŠU sign on any extant fragment.

63. Otten indicates that this entire word is preserved (1981, 22), but the ḪA sign is in a severely damaged section of KUB I 10 iii' 5' and does not appear on any other extant fragment.

64. Reading *ku-iš-ki* with KUB I 4 iii' 40' rather than *ku-iš* with KUB I 1 iii 73' and KUB I 10 iii' 8'.

65. This word is certain, though none of the three relevant exemplars preserves it perfectly. KUB I 1 iii 77' has the I sign, which is very close, but not identical, to TUR (Otten transcribes TUR¹); KUB I 4 iii' 42' has T[UR]; and KUB I 10 iii' 13' has Š E-~~EH~~HI-[IR], the Akkadogram equivalent.

66. Both preserved exemplars (KUB I 1 iv 2 and KUB I 9 iv' 9') read *e-ḥ u-ši*. This form is nonsensical; the ŠI sign must be a mistake for the similar WA sign.

67. This word is preserved almost identically in three exemplars: *4mar-ḥ a-tain* KUB I 1 iv 6; *4mar-aḥ -dain* KUB I 4 iv' 51' and Bo 69/256; and *4ma-ar-ḥ a-tain* KUB I 10 iv' 23'. The meaning of the word is obscure, however; I translate “prevail” following HHw: 100 sub (⁴)marḥ -, “Erfolg haben?”

- iv 11 IŠTU ŠA LÜ MUDI≈KA neyari šallanunun≈war≈an
iv 12 kuit ammu nu≈war≈an ḫ uwappi [D]I-ešni ḫuwappi
iv 13 DINGIR-LIM-ni UL parā UL kuwapikki tarnaḫ ḫ un
iv 14 kinuna≈ya≈war≈an karapmi nu≈war≈an ANA dUTU URUPÜ-n[a]
iv 15 AŠŠUM LÜ SANGA-ÜTTIM tittanumi ziqq≈a≈wa≈mu≈za
iv 16 dIŠTAR paraššin iya nu≈mu dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA EGIR-an
iv 17 tiyat nu≈mu memišket GIM-an kišat≈ya≈za
iv 18 nu≈za dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA parā ḫ andandatar d[p]iya≈ya
iv 19 mekki tekkuššanut nu m^murḫ i^dU-upaš BĒLÜ.ḪI.A
iv 20 kuiēš kuwapi arḫ a uiyat nu≈šmaš^dIŠTAR Ü-at
iv 21 innara≈uwa≈šmaš⁶⁸ dariyanteš KUR.KUR.MEŠ URU^h attima≈ma≈wa≈k[ar]
iv 22 ḫ ūmanda^dIŠTAR ANA m^mḫ attušili andan
iv 23 neḫ ḫ un nu≈za ŠA IŠTAR parā ḫ andandatar apiya≈ya
iv 24 mekki ūḫ ḫ ur^murḫ i^dU-upan kuwapi dameda
iv 25 UL kuwapikki tarnaš n≈an≈kan INA URU^hšamuḫ a
iv 26 ŠAḪ GIM-an ḫ ūmma EGIR-pa ištappaš ammu≈ma
iv 27 LÜ.MEŠ gašga.ḪI.A kuiēš [k]ūrur ešer
iv 28 n≈at≈mu EGIR-an tiēr URUKÜ.BABBAR-ašš≈a≈mu ḫ ūmanza
iv 29 EGIR-an tiyat ŠA ŠEŠ≈YA nakkiyanni
iv 30 ḫ andaš UL manqa iyanun nu ANA m^murḫ i^dU-up
iv 31 GAM-an EGIR-pa pāun n≈an≈kan ŠA LÜŠU.DAB⁶⁹ iwar katta
iv 32 uwatenun nu≈šši INA KUR URU^hnuḫ ašši URU.DIDLİ.Ḫ.A BÀD ADDIN
iv 33 n≈aš apiya ēšta mān≈kan damāin
iv 34 ḫkupiyyatin kupta man INA KUR URU^hkaranduniya
iv 35 penništa nu GIM-an memian AŠME n≈an ēppūn
iv 36 n≈an≈kan A.AB.BA tapuša uppaḫ ḫ ur^mšipa-LÜ-inn≈a
iv 37 ZAG zainuer Ê-TUM≈ma≈šši≈kan arḫ a daḫḫ un
iv 38 n≈at ANA dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA ADDIN nu ammu ANA dIŠTAR
GAŠAN≈YA
iv 39 apāt ADDIN dIŠTAR≈ma≈mu≈kan GAŠAN≈YA ilani ilani
iv 40 namma tišket

68. I interpret *innara* as the adverb “straightaway,” with *dariyanteš* as a common nominative plural participle from the verb *dariya*- “call, address, summon.” Most interpreters treat *innarawaš* as a form of the verb *innarawai*- “to be mighty,” and *dariyanteš* as a form of the verb *tariya*- “to be exhausted.” But *innarawai*- is a denominative verb; the factitive verb is *innaraḫ ḫ* - (HHw61). For other explanations of this difficult phrase, cf. Nowicki 1985, 26–31.

69. Reading LÜŠU.DAB with KBo III 6 iii 62 and KUB I 8 iv’ 15’ rather than the obscure LÜ-LI with KUB I 1 iv 31; for the reading of this logogram, see HZL: 123 sign 68–ŠU.

- iv 41 *nu≈za DUMU LUGAL ešun nu≈za GAL MEŠEDI kišḫ aḫat*
 iv 42 *GAL MEŠEDI≈ma≈za LUGAL KUR ḫ akpišša kišḫaḫat LUGAL KUR*
[ḫ akp]š≈ma≈za
 iv 43 *LUGAL GAL namma kišḫ aḫat namma≈mu≈kan^dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA*
 iv 44 ^{LÜ.MEŠ}*aršanattalluš^š LÜ.MEŠ^ḫ arpanalliuš*
 iv 45 *BĒLŪ.ḪI.A DĪNI≈YA ŠU-i dāiš nu kuiēš IŠTU^{GIŠ}TUKUL eker⁷⁰*
 iv 46 *kuiēš U₄-azza eker n≈aš≈za ḫ ūmanteš≈pat GAM-an arḫa*
 iv 47 *zennaḫ ḫ un nu≈mu^dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA LUGAL-ŪTTA ŠA KUR ḫ atti*
 iv 48 *pešta nu≈za LUGAL GAL kišḫ aḫat nu≈mu DUMU LUGAL dāš*
 iv 49 *nu≈mu≈kan^dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA LUGAL-iznanni anda tarništa*
 iv 50 *nu≈mu LUGAL.MEŠ MAḪRU≈YA āššauwaš memiyanaš kuiēš e[šer]⁷¹*
 iv 51 *n≈at≈mu āššauwaš≈pat memiyanaš kišantat*
 iv 52 *[^LÜ.MEŠ^T ĒMĒ≈ya≈mu uiškeuwan tiēr uppeššar.ḪI.A≈ma≈mu*
 iv 53 *uppeškeuwan tiēr uppeššar.ḪI.A≈ma≈mu kue*
 iv 54 *uppeš[kan]zi⁷² n≈at ANA AB.BA.ḪI.A U AB.BA AB.BA.ḪI.A*
 iv 55 *UL kuedanikki [up]per nāḫ ūwaš≈ma≈mu³ kuiš LUGAL-uš*
 iv 56 *ēšta n≈aš≈mu≈kan naḫ ta kurur.ḪI.A≈ma≈mu kue ēšta*
 iv 57 *n≈at≈za taruḫ ḫ un ANA KUR.KUR^{URU}ḫ atti≈ma≈za≈kan ZAG.ḪI.A*
ANA ZAG.ḪI.A
 iv 58 *[an]da daḫ ḫ un ANA PĀNI AB.BA.ḪI.A≈YA AB.BA AB.[BA.ḪI].A*
 iv 59 *kuiēš kūrur ešer ammuk≈ma takšul[āe]⁷⁴*
 iv 60 *nu≈mu DINGIR-LUM kuit GAŠAN≈YA kiššan kaniššan ḫ arta*
 iv 61 *nu ŠA ŠEŠ≈YA nakkiyanni ḫ andaš UL manqa DŪnun*
 iv 62 *[nu DUMU ŠEŠ≈Y]A^{md}LAMMA-an šarā daḫ ḫ un nu≈za ŠEŠ≈YA*
^m*NIR.GÁL-iš*
 iv 63 *ku[i]t AŠRU^{URU} dU-aššan parnawišket n≈an apiya pidi*

70. The reading ^{GIŠ}TUKUL eker is a conflation of the two preserved exemplars. KUB XIX 72 iii' 7' reads ^{GIŠ}TUKUL [...] -ke-er; KUB I 8 iv' 26' reads ^{GIŠ}x e-ker, but the traces of x do not look like TUKUL (there are two vertical wedges on the right side of the sign; the traces suggest DAG).

71. Traces of the final sign are preserved on KUB XIX 72 iv' 50' and KUB I 8 iv' 30'; the traces on the latter exemplar do not suggest ŠIR (they almost resemble ŠĪR [= BU], though that would be a strange phonetic reading here) but no better alternative presents itself.

72. KUB I 1 iv 55 reads [...] -x-zi here, suggesting the (historical?) present form *uppeškanzi*. KBo III 6 iv 14 preserves *uppešker*, the preterite form of the same verb.

73. I treat *nāḫ ūwaš* as a verbal substantive genitive singular form of *naḫ* (ḫ) - "fear, respect, reverence." For the deontic use of the verbal substantive in the genitive, see *GHL* §25.8.

74. Following Otten (1981, 26), I read *ták-šu-l[a-a-e]r*, the preterite third-person plural verbal form, with KUB I 1 iv 59. The other extant exemplar, KUB I 8 iv' 37', preserves *ták-šu-l[a]-ni*.

- iv 64 LUGAL-iznanni tittanunun nu≈mu ^dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA⁷⁵ mašiwani
 iv 65 da[t]ta⁷⁶ nu≈mu šallai pidi ANA KUR ^{URU}h atti LUGAL-iznanni
 iv 66 tittanut ammuk≈ma ANA ^dIŠTAR GAŠAN≈YA É ^{md}30-^dU ADDIN
 iv 67 [n≈at]≈kan EGIR-an tarnah h un n≈at parā peh h un
 iv 68 [an]nallan kuit ēšta apāt≈ši parā peh h un
 iv 69 [a]mmuqq≈a kuit h arkun apadd≈aya parā peh h un
 iv 70 n≈at≈kan EGIR-an tarnah h un n≈at ANA DINGIR-LIM parā ADDIN
 iv 71 É ^{md}30-^dU≈ma≈šši kuit ADDIN nu URU.DIDLI.ḪI.A kuiēš kuiēš
 iv 72 [ŠA] ^{md}30-^dU n≈an≈kan h ūmanti≈ya≈pat EGIR-an^{NA4}ZI.KIN
 iv 73 [t]ittanuškanzi ^{DUG}h aršiyali≈ya≈kan išh uiškanzi
 iv 74 [^d]IŠTAR DINGIR-LIM-aš≈mu nu≈šmaš≈an ^dIŠTAR šarlaimmin
 iv 75 [ši]panzakanzi ammuqq≈a≈za kuit h aštiyaš É-er DÜ-nun
 iv 76 n≈at ANA DINGIR-LIM parā peh h un DUMṬYA≈ya≈tta
 iv 77 ^mduth aliyani İR-anni parā peh h un nu ÉIŠTAR
 iv 78 [^md]uth aliyaš DUMṬYA ⁴tapardu nu≈za ammuk İR DINGIR-LIM
 iv 79 apāšš≈a İR DINGIR-LIM ēšdu É-er≈ma kuit ANA DINGIR-LIM
 ADDIN
 iv 80 nu h ūmanza ANA DINGIR-LIM ⁴karnan ⁴marnan ēššau⁷⁷
-
- iv 81 kuiš≈ma≈kan ⁴ziladuwa NUMUN ^mh attušilṣpudu-[h] epa
 iv 82 ANA ^dIŠTAR İR-anni arh a dāi ŠA É garupaḫiaš≈za
 iv 83 ezzan GIŠ-ru⁷⁸ KISLAḪ ŠA ^dIŠTAR ^{URU}šamuḫ a ilaliyḏzi]

75. Reading [GAŠAN]≈YA with KBo III 6 iv 25 rather than the erroneous GAŠAN-*ma* of KUB I 1 iv 64. The lone sign on the right section of iv 25 on KBo III 6 is a clear YA and precisely where one would expect this sign to appear, especially in relation to the join with KUB XIX 70.

76. This form is difficult to discern. Neither preserved exemplar has the entire word; KUB I 1 iv 65 reads [...] -x-ta (with only one vertical wedge on the right side of the x sign) while KUB XIX 70 iv' 25' reads *da-at*² - [...], but the traces of the AD sign could equally well indicate such signs as AB, UM, or DU. Additionally, *datta* is not an attested form. The verb *dā-* “take” appears as *dāš* in the preterite second- and third-person singular forms—the latter of which appears frequently in this text—which indicates against the preterite here. But neither does this form accord with the present second-person singular, which occurs normally as *datti* (GHL §13.11). I translate *da[t]ta* tentatively as the preterite second-person singular (“did you take”); the following verb, *tittanut*, is clearly preterite, though it does not provide an obvious solution to the question of person (cf. GHL §12.44).

77. This phrase is obscure. Wegner suggests that ⁴*marnan* is simply a reduplicated form of ⁴*karnan* with an /m/ (1989). Unfortunately, however, the meaning remains elusive since ⁴*karnan* is hapax in Hittite. I translate “serve (and) observe” in an effort to maintain the rhyme (which admittedly works better with the German “schalten und walten”); van den Hout’s “strive and strain(?)” (COS 1.77:204) also preserves the paronomastic flavor.

78. I translate *ezzan GIŠ-ru*, literally “straw (or) splinter,” as “anything,” following von

- iv 84 *n≈aš ANA ^dIŠTAR ^{URU}šamuḥ a EN DĪNI≈ŠU ēšdu*
 iv 85 *šaḥ ḥ ani≈ya≈aš luzzi lē kuiški ēp[zi]*
-
- iv 86 *kuišš≈a≈kan 4ziladuwa DUMU≈ŠU DUMU.DUMU≈ŠU ŠÀ.BAL.BAL*
 iv 87 *ziladuwa ŠA ^mḥ attušilīpudu-ḥ epa šarā*
 iv 88 *išparzazi⁷⁹ n≈aš≈kan ŠÀ DINGIR.MEŠ ANA ^dIŠTAR ^{URU}šamuḥ [a]*
 iv 89 *naḥ ḥ anza ēšdu*

§1 i 1–4) Thus Tabarna Hattusili (III), great king, king of Hatti, son of Mursili (II), great king, king of Hatti, grandson of Suppiluliuma, great king, king of Hatti, scion of Hattusili (I), king of Kussar.

§2 i 5–8) The providence of Ishtar I will speak. Let humanity hear it! In the future, may His Majesty's son, his grandson, (and) the seed of His Majesty, among the gods be respectful to Ishtar!

§3 i 9–21) My father Mursili begot us four children—Halpasulupi, Muwatalli, Hattusili, and Massanauzzi, a daughter. Of all these I was the youngest child, and while I was still a boy (lit. “son/child”), I was a “one-of-the-reins.”⁸⁰ (Then) Ishtar, my lady, sent my brother Muwatalli to my father Mursili through a dream, saying, “For Hattusili years are short; he will not live (long). Now give him over to me, and let him be for me a *šankunni*-priest, and he will live.” So my father took me, (his) son, and handed me over to the goddess for service, and to the goddess, as a *šankunni*-priest, I made offerings. At the hand of Ishtar, my lady, I experienced pleasant things, and Ishtar, my lady, took me by the hand and I was sustained by her.

§4 i 22–60) When my father Mursili became a god, my brother Muwatalli sat on the throne of his father and I became lord of the army before my brother. My brother installed me as chief of the bodyguard and gave me to administer

Schuler (1983), who translates the pair as a synecdoche for trifle (“Kleinigkeit”). The appearance of this word pair in the Proclamation of Telipinu ii 61 suggests that it is an idiom, likely parallel to the Akkadian phrase *ḥ āmu u ḥ ušbu* (see von Schuler 1983, 162; also CAD H : 259 sub *ḥ ušbu* 3.a). I translate the entire pair as the *nomen regens* of *Ē garupaḥ iaš* although this admittedly obscures the meaning of KISLAḤ “threshing floor?” Against van den Hout (COS 1.77:204), the interpretation of the entire phrase as a pair of genitival expressions, “straw from the storehouse (or) splinter from the threshing floor,” does not seem warranted. This would split up the word pair *ezzan GIŠ-ru* and also necessitate a strange word order with *rectum-regens-regens-rectum*.

79. I interpret *šarā išparzazi* as “come to rule,” following HHw: 66 (“zur Regierung kommen”), and thus take the son/grandson/scion as the subject of the verb (cf. CHD L–N: 341 sub *naḥ* (*ḥ*) - 2'). Van den Hout (COS 1.77:204) interprets *šarā išparzazi* as “stand up against” and thus treats the son/grandson/scion as the object. Both explanations are plausible; I prefer the former because the final phrase seems more like a positive exhortation than a negative curse.

80. The meaning of this phrase, which I translate literally, is obscure.

the Upper Land. So I ruled the Upper Land. But before me, Arma-Tarhunta, son of Zidā, was administering it. Because Ishtar, my lady, had recognized me, my brother Muwatalli also was good to me—but when the people noted the recognition of Ishtar, my lady, for me and the goodness of my brother, they envied me. Arma-Tarhunta, son of Zidā, and also other people, began to do harm to [m]e, and they damaged me, and I was defeated. (Then) my brother Muwatalli named me to the wheel,⁸¹ but Ishtar, my lady, appeared to me in a dream, and in the dream she said to me, “I am leaving you to the god. Do not fear!”⁸² Then by the god I was absolved. Because the goddess, my lady, took me by the hand, she at no point left me to any evil deity or evil case; she at no point let an enemy weapon sway over me. Ishtar, my lady, took me in every respect. Whenever I became sick, I, the sick one, experienced divine providence—the goddess, my lady, took me by the hand in everything, and because I myself was a man of providence, because I walked before the gods in providence, I at no point did an evil action against a person. The goddess, my lady—you always take me to you in every way. Is (lit. “Was”) it not so? The goddess, my lady, at no point neglected me in a fearful hour, to an enemy she never delivered me, nor did she ever deliver me to my court opponent (or) any enviers. Whether it was the word of an enemy or the word of a court opponent or some word of the palace, Ishtar, my lady, held (her) cape over me in all things and took me in all things. My enemies (and) enviers, Ishtar, my lady, put (them) into my hand and I finished them off.

§5 i 61–74) When my brother Muwatalli inspected this affair, no wrong action remained with me, and he took me back and put in my hand the army (and) chariotry of Hatti, and I led all the army (and) chariotry of Hatti. My brother Muwatalli regularly sent me forth, and when Ishtar, my lady, had recognized me, wherever I turned my eyes to an enemy land, nobody turned enemy eyes back to me and I conquered the lands of the enemy. The recognition of Ishtar, my lady, was mine. In the midst of the lands of Hatti, whoever was an enemy, him I drove out from the lands of Hatti. The lands of the enemy which I was conquering while I was a boy, them I will deal with separately on a tablet and I will place it before the deity.

§6a i 75–ii 5a) When my brother Muwatalli, at the word of his deity, went down to the Lower Land, he left behind Hattusa. [My brother] took up [the gods] of Hatti and the “Dead Ones,” and he [car]ried them [down] to the [Lower] Land. Afterward, all of the Kaska lands, Pishuru and Daistipassa, rebelled. [They removed] the lands [Ishupitta] (and) Marista, and the fortress(es).

§6b ii 5b–30) The enemy cros[sed over] the Marassanda River and he began to strike Kanes. [...] he began to strike again. The cities Ha[...], Kurustama, and Gazziura became enemies on the spot. They began to strike the ruined cities

81. For the meaning of this phrase, see §4.3 pp. 153–54 n. 99.

82. For a different treatment of this statement, see Sturtevant and Bechtel 1935, 67; see also Tatišvili 2010.

of Hatti. But the enemy of the land Durmitta began to strike again [the land of Tu]huppiya. [(...)] But the land Ippassana was empty [...] they approached [as f]ar as the land Suwadara—but the cities [Hakpis] and Istahara, the two of them escaped. [...] was cut off, and they did not sow their seed for ten years. Furthermore, during those years that my brother Muwatalli was in the land Hatti, all of the Kaska lands became (their) enemy, and they completely crushed the lands Sadduppa and Dankuwa, but he overthrew (them) at the city Pittiyariga. And my brother Muwatalli sent me, but he gave me only a few troops (and) chariots. So the troops, the help of the land, who were few, I brought down, and I marched, and I oppressed the enemy at the city Hahha. And I fought against him, and Ishtar, my lady, ran before me. And I struck him down and I set up a *stele*. And those whom he held on to in Hattusa, them I took and I resettled them all. I seized the leaders and I gave them over to my brother. Now this was my first manly act, (and) Ishtar, my lady, for the first time called my name on this campaign.

§7 ii 31–47) But it came to pass that the Pishurean enemy invaded. The cities Karahna (and) Marista were in enemy (territory). From there the land Taqqasta was its border; from here the city Talmaliya was its border. There were 800 teams of horses, and the troops were innumerable, but my brother Muwatalli sent me and he gave me 120 teams of horses, but not even one man of the army was with me. And Ishtar, my lady, ran before me there too, and there too I conquered the enemy by my own power. But the man who was the leader, when I smote him, the enemy fled. Those cities of Hatti which were cut off, they were fighting and they began to strike down the enemy. A *stele* I set up in Wistawanda. There, too, the recognition of Ishtar, my lady, was mine. The weapon that I held there, I plated it and I placed it before the goddess, my lady.

§8 ii 48–68) My brother came after me and he built up the cities Anziliya and Tapiqqa, and he withdrew. He did not come near me. The troops (and) chariots of Hatti he sent in front and he brought them away. Thereupon he took up the gods of Hatti and the “Dead Ones” and he brought them to the city Tarhuntassa, and he built up the city Tarhuntassa, but to Durmitta (and) Kurustama he didn’t go. He left me at these lands, and he gave me these empty lands to oversee. The cities Ishupitta, Marista, Hissashapa, Katapa, Hanhana, Darahna, Hattena, Durmitta, Palā, Tūmanna, Gassiyā, (and) Sappa, the Hulana River, chariots, and “golden knights”—I led them all. But the cities Hakpis and Istahara he gave me in servitude. And in Hakpis he made me king. And concerning these empty lands which my brother gave into my hand—since Ishtar, my lady, took me by the hand, some enemies I prevailed over, but others were reconciled to me. And Ishtar, my lady, stood next to me, and these empty lands I resettled of my own ability, and I reverted them to being Hittite cities.

§9 ii 69–iii 13) It happened, when my brother went to Egypt, that those lands which I had resettled, the army (and) chariotry of this land I led down to Egypt on campaign for my brother. And before my brother, since the army (and) chariotry of Hatti were in my power, I commanded them. But when Arma-Tarhunta, son of

Zidā, noted the goodness of Ishtar, my lady, and my brother also, for me, (then) because they were not successful with anything, he, together with his wife (and) his son, again began to use sorcery against me. Samuha, the city of the goddess, he filled with sorcery. But when I returned from Egypt, I went to the city Lawa-zantiya to sacrifice to the goddess, and I worshipped the goddess. The daughter of Pentipsarri, the *sanga*-priest, Pudu-Hepa—[at] the word of the goddess I took her as wife, and we married. [And] the goddess gave [u]s the love of husband (and) wife, and [w]e h[a]d sons (and) daughters. Then the goddess, my lady, appeared to me in a dream, saying, “Serve me, [together with] (your) household.” So I [ser]ved the goddess, together with my household. And our household, which we made for ourselves—the goddess came to us and the household [prosp]ered. Such was the recognition of Ishtar, my lady. [And I went] to the cities Hawarkina and Delmuna (and) I [bui]lt (them) up. But Hakpis became an e[n]emy. I drove away the Kas-kaeans and b[y] my own ability I put it in order. And I became king of Hakpis, and (my) wife became queen of Hakpis.

§10a iii 14–30') And when it happened that another case appeared at the palace,⁸³ Ishtar, my lady, showed (me) providence at that time too. The sentence again brought the verdict (lit. “the lawsuit brought the case back”)⁸⁴—they found sorcery against Arma-Tarhunta, with his wife (and) his sons, and they presented it before him. And he had filled Samuha, the city of my goddess, with sorcery, so the goddess, my lady, subjugated him to me. And my brother turned him over to me with his wife, his sons, (and) his household. And my brother said to me, “Sipaziti is not involved.” And, because my brother elevated me over [Arma-Tar]hunta through this case, I did not retaliate⁸⁵ against him. And Arma-Tarhunta, [be]cause he was a blood relative to me, and because he was an old man [and] he caused me to pity (him), I let him go. [And] Sipaziti, his [son], I let go also. I did nothing whatsoever to them. But the [wif]e of Arma-Tarhunta, and his son, I sent away [to] Alasiya, and I took away hal[f his household] and returned it to Arma-Tarhunta.

§10b iii 31'–54'a) Because my [brother] Muwatalli had [give]n [me the cit-ies] Durmitta, [...], Zip[lanta, Hat]tena, Ha[k]pis, (and) Is[tahara in servitude], I resettled [... emp]ty [...] became [...] because [I r]uled [Hattu]sa and he [...] me in lordship, I [did] not [do] anything at all because of [... N]ow beca[use] there

83. Or “When it happened that the lawsuit was somehow reopened by the palace.” See COS 1.77:202; van den Hout 1998, 54–55.

84. This phrase is difficult to decipher grammatically, but the meaning is clear (cf. COS 1.77:202, which translates, “The process resulted again in the verdict: ...”).

85. Lit. “I did not again fall into doing bad/evil against him.” I translate “retaliate” because the literal translation suggests that Hattusili had earlier done bad/evil against Arma-Tarhunta, which is certainly not what he intends to say here. He refused to respond in kind to Arma-Tarhunta, not repaying evil for evil.

[wa]s n[o] *adu[l]*t son to my brother [*of his wife*], I to[o]k up Urhi-Tessup, son of a concubine, and [...] him as lord ov[er] Hatti; all [...] I put into (his) hand. And he was [...] over the lands of [...], but I w[a]s king of Hakkis. With the army (and) chariotry [...]. And because the city Neriq was completely destroyed from the [da]ys of Hantili, I reb[u]ilt it and (of) the lands that surrounded Neriq—the cities Nēra and Hastira [I ma]de the border. I [subjug]ated all of them, [and I made them] tributari[es. Mount] Haharwa and the Marassanda [River (...)]—that wh[ic]h they [held] in distress from Neri[q and] Hakkis, I subjugated it all.

§10c iii 54'b–iv 6) But when Urhi-Tessup noted the goodness [of the goddess] for me, he envied me [and] he har[med] me. He took away all of my administrators from me, and the cit[y Samuha] also he took away from me, and the empty lands that I had resettled, al[l] those he also took away from me. And he diminished me—but at the word of the goddess, he did not take away Hakkis from me—[because] I was *sanga*-priest to Tessup of the city Neriq, he therefore did not take it away from me (either). So out [o]f respect for my brother I did not retaliate accordingly, [a]nd for seven years I was tolerant. But that one schemed my destruction by word of god and by word of human, and he took away Hakkis and Neriq from me. So I was no longer tolerant, and I became his enemy. But when I became his enemy, still I did nothing impure—I did not rebel against him with chariot, nor did I rebel against him within (his) house. I ordered him like a man, saying, “You [dis]puted with me, yet you are a great king, but I, the one fortress which you left me, (I) am king of only that one fortress. So come! Ishtar of Samuha and Tessup of Neriq will decide our [c]ase.” When to Urhi-Tessup I wrote thus—if someone says the following, “Why at first did you install him to kingship, but now you write to him (as an) enemy?” (I will answer), “If he had in no way disputed with me, would (the gods) truly have subjugated a great king to a minor king?” Now, because he disputed with me, the gods have subjugated him to me by (their) decision. When I commanded him (with) these words, saying, “Come!” that one fled from the city Marassantiya and he came to the Upper Land, and Sipaziti son of Arma-Tarhunta was with him. He had called him to the troops of the Upper Land, but because Sipaziti was evil against me, he did not *prevail* against me.

§11 iv 7–40) But because Ishtar, my lady, had previously spoken the kingship for me, at that time Ishtar, my lady, appeared to my wife in a dream, saying, “I am marching in front of your husband. All Hattusa is turning to your husband. Since I raised him, to an evil [c]ase or an evil deity I never at all abandoned him; now too I will lift him up and I will install him as *sanga*-priest before the Sungoddess of Arinn[a], and you, worship me as Ishtar (of the) *gemstone*.” So Ishtar, my lady, again stepped to me, and just as she spoke, it happened. And t[h]ere, too, Ishtar, my lady, showed (her) recognition abundantly. And the lords whom Urhi-Tessup had sent away somewhere, to them Ishtar appeared in a dream, saying, “Straight-away you are summoned. All of the lands of Hatti I, Ishtar, have turned over to Hattusili.” There, too, I experienced the recognition of Ishtar abundantly. She left Urhi-Tessup no alternative, nothing whatever, and she imprisoned him in Samuha

like a pig in a sty. But as for me—the Kaskaean who had been (my) enemies, they supported me, and all Hattusa supported me. (But) out of respect for my brother I did nothing at all. I returned to Urhi-Tessup and I brought him down in the manner of a captive. To him I gave fortified cities in the land Nuhassi, and he dwelled there. (But) when he conspired another conspiracy—when he rode to Babylonia—when I heard about the affair, I seized him and I sent him away toward the sea. Also Sipaziti they forced to cross the border, and I took away his household and I gave it to Ishtar, my lady. So I gave that to Ishtar, my lady, and Ishtar, my lady, continually went with me step by step.

§12a iv 41–48a) I was a prince, and I became chief of the guard. While chief of the guard, I became king of Hakpis. While king of [Hakpi]s, I further became great king. Then Ishtar, my lady, had given (my) enviers, antagonists, and legal opponents into my hand. And some died by the sword (lit. “by the weapon”); others died naturally (lit. “on the [appointed] day”)—all of them I finished off. And Ishtar, my lady, gave the kingship of Hatti to me.

§12b iv 48b–61) So I became king, and she took me, a prince, and Ishtar, my lady, released me for kingship. Those who were on good terms (lit. “of good words”) with the kings (who were) before me, they became on good terms with me⁸⁶ and they began to send envoys to me. They began to send me presents, and the presents which they were sen[din]g me, they did not [se]nd to any of (my) fathers or grandfathers. The king whom (before) I revered, he now revered me, and those who were my enemies, I prevailed over them. To the Hatti lands I added many territories (lit. “I adjoined borders to borders”). Those who were enemies in the day of my fathers (and) gran[df]athers, th[ey s]ought peace with me. So because the goddess, my lady, had recognized me, out of respect for my brother I did not do anything at all.

§12c iv 62–80) [M]y [nephew], Kuruntiya, I took up and (in) the place in the city Tarhuntassa that my brother Muwatalli had annexed, at that place I installed him to kingship. Ishtar, my lady, how often *did you take* me! And at the great place you installed me to the kingship of Hatti. And to Ishtar, my lady, I gave the household of Arma-Tarhunta—I relinquished [it] and I handed it over. What was [fo]rmerly, that I handed over to her, and what I had, that also I handed over. I relinquished it and I handed it over to the goddess. And the household of Arma-Tarhunta that I gave to her—whatever cities [belonged to] Arma-Tarhunta, at every cult stone they will [i]nstall her and they will pour out a cultic vessel. Ishtar is my goddess, and they will honor her as Ishtar the Lofty. The *mausoleum* that I made for myself, I handed it over to the goddess. Also my son, Tudhaliya, I handed over for service to you. The house of Ishtar let [T]udhaliya, my son, rule. (As) I am a servant of the goddess, also let that one be a servant of the goddess. And (in)

86. My interpretation of this difficult phrase follows CHD L–N: 340 sub *naḫ* (*ḫ*)-4’.

the house that I gave to the goddess, let everyone work to *serve (and) observe* for the goddess.

§13 iv 81–85) The one who in the future takes away the seed of Hattusili (and) Pudu-[H]epa from the service of Ishtar, (or) who desir[es] from the storehouse anything (lit. “straw [or] splinter”) of *the threshing floor* of Ishtar of Samuha, let him be the legal opponent of Ishtar of Samuha. For obligatory service (or) corvée let no one tak[e] them.

§14 iv 86–89) Also, in the future, his son, his grandson, (or) the future scion of Hattusili (and) Pudu-Hepa who comes to rule, let him be reverential among the gods to Ishtar of Samuha.

4.3 APOLOGETIC ANALYSIS

It is no coincidence that the Autobiography was the first ancient Near Eastern text to be dubbed an apology by modern scholars (see §1.2 above)—the primary charge against Hattusili, usurpation, is obvious to even the most casual reader, and Hattusili’s rhetorical strategies for combating the charge, while effective, do not require much analysis.

Hattusili had no claim to the throne—Hattusili’s legitimation. Of the triad of strategies used by usurpers to establish their legitimacy, Hattusili appeals almost exclusively to that of divine election.⁸⁷ Although he emphasizes his good relationship with Muwatalli, it is always in the context of his loyalty to his brother and his unwillingness to make an illegitimate play for the throne. At no point does Hattusili insinuate that his brother desired that Hattusili succeed him, which makes sense since Muwatalli apparently nominated Urhi-Tessup as his successor publicly (Hawkins 2001; see also above §4.1 p. 123 n. 11). Neither does Hattusili assert that his supporters in the kingdom demanded his coronation.⁸⁸ With support of

87. Hattusili’s emphasis on divine election is rivaled only by that of David (see §5.3), and the theological claims strike me as the most obvious point of connection between the two oft-compared texts (cf. McCarter 1980, 498–99, 502–4).

88. The closest the Autobiography comes to making this claim comes in Pudu-Hepa’s dream, wherein Ishtar tells her, “All Hattusa is turning to your husband” (*nu≈wa≈za≈kan* ^{URUKÜ}. BABBAR-aš h ūmanza / IŠTU ŠA¹⁰ MUDI≈KA *neyari*, iv 10–11; the present indicative verb *neyari* could also be translated “will turn,” cf. COS 1.77:203). But given the context of a dream of reassurance, I interpret this more as proof that Hattusili is emerging as the victor rather than a use of the popular acclamation motif to legitimate his rise.

Hattusili’s brief description of his power base raises certain questions about his legitimacy. If we take his account at face value, it seems that he did not have the military support of the Upper Land, for he states that Urhi-Tessup “called [Sipaziti] to the troops of the Upper Land” (iv 4). Instead, Hattusili’s support consisted of three groups, the “lords whom Urhi-Tessup had sent away somewhere” (iv 19–20), the “Kaskaean who had been my enemies” (iv 27), and “all Hattusa” (iv 28). All three of these groups were predisposed to be hostile

the predecessor and the citizenry apparently ruled out by circumstance, Hattusili turns to the gods, one goddess in particular, to plead his case. He vilifies Urhi-Tessup, but while the latter's unprovoked attempts on Hattusili disqualify him from kingship, they do not show why Hattusili is a suitable alternative. Hattusili derives his own legitimacy from his election by Ishtar (Hoffner 1975, 54). Such a claim of special election constituted a somewhat innovative ideological move on Hattusili's part.⁸⁹ He attributes all of his success to Ishtar and explicitly states on three occasions that she provided him with the kingship (iv 7–8, 47–48, 49). Overall, he mentions Ishtar forty-six times in the Autobiography, nearly always in the context of his prosperity due to her “providence.” This “providence,” Hittite *parā ḫ andandatar*, is a loaded term (see Wolf 1967, 27–34) that Wolf defines as “divine power usually displayed in an outpouring of grace to strengthen, deliver, or encourage its recipient” (1967, 34).⁹⁰ Hattusili describes himself as a “man of providence” (i 47); he had no need to act ambitiously because Ishtar took care of everything for him.⁹¹ Divine providence manifested itself in Hattusili's healing

toward Muwatalli's line, suggesting that Hattusili took advantage of the enemies of the royal household. Some historians suggest that many were ambivalent to whether Urhi-Tessup or Hattusili were king (Bryce 2005, 262; V. Parker 1999, 289), but perhaps this was more of a contest between loyalists and disaffected outsiders.

If this interpretation is correct, then the formation of a power base from disenfranchised former enemies and a rival capital provides another startling parallel to the David story.

89. One can perhaps detect adumbrations of this motif in earlier texts, such as the Ten-Year Annals of Mursili II (§6; see COS 2.16:82–90; *HST* 112), but they fall far short of what appears in the Autobiography. Giorgieri and Mora write, “Ḫattusili employs familiar, traditional techniques to exalt the figure of the sovereign, but new is the recurring theme of predestination, the idea that a deity had chosen him. In this way Ḫattusili was able to justify, even celebrate, his usurpation of the throne” (2010, 137).

90. Cf. also the discussion in Archi 1971, 188–89; Archi defines this term as “divine justice.” The expression *parā ḫ andandatar* was most recently treated by Mouton, who seeks to explain its connection with dreams in two religious texts. Mouton asserts that depending on the context, *parā ḫ andandatar* may have any of several different meanings such as “pouvoir divin,” “divine providence,” “protection divine,” “bienveillance divine,” and “parole divine” (2007, 524–28). She justifies the first two meanings with various examples from the Autobiography.

91. It is worth mentioning, however, that Hattusili never explicitly discusses his ambition, or lack thereof; he does not overtly employ the motif of passivity. Instead, he is an active participant in Ishtar's plan: “My enemies (and) enviers, Ishtar, my lady, put (them) into my hand and I finished them off” (i 58–60). A slight contrast appears here between Hattusili and David, who “is presented as a man caught up in events he cannot control. In his case, however [as opposed to Saul], everything seems inevitably to go well, and he advances step by step toward the kingship almost in spite of himself” (McCarter 1980b, 503). This contrast can be seen in their (alleged) roles in the downfalls of their respective predecessors. Hattusili litigates against Urhi-Tessup and, when cleared by the gods, marches

from grave illness (§3), his exoneration in legal disputes (§§4, 5, 10a, 10c), his military victories (§§5, 6b, 7, 8), and especially his overcoming of those jealous of him (§§9, 10c, 11). Because of divine providence Hattusili managed to remain innocent in every matter: “because I walked before the gods in providence, I at no point did an evil action against a person” (i 48–50).

Hattusili attempts to validate these claims in a somewhat circular manner—the very fact of his elevation at Urhi-Tessup’s expense demonstrates the justice of his cause, he argues.⁹² By ascribing control of the situation to the gods, he contends that the victor is, *ipso facto*, their favorite. One sees this most clearly in the following passage of the Autobiography: “If someone says the following, ‘Why at first did you install him to kingship, but now you write to him (as an) enemy?’ (I will answer), ‘If he had in no way disputed with me, would (the gods) truly have subjugated a great king to a minor king?’” (iii 73’–77’). This manifestation of divine favor also serves Hattusili in the opposite manner, by demonstrating the gods’ displeasure with Hattusili’s opponents. Hattusili asserts that in the cases of both Arma-Tarhunta and Urhi-Tessup, because of their unprovoked aggression, Ishtar (or the gods as a group) “subjugated him to me” (*n≈an≈mu ... katterrah ta/katterrah h er*, iii 20’, 78’–79’). As his detractors doubtless accused him of conniving to wrest power from those who appropriately wielded it, Hattusili cleverly turns this around by arguing that he had no need to scheme since the gods orchestrated the downfall of his enemies.

Hattusili also weaves the theme of moral rectitude into the web of success and divine blessing. Though morality does not come to the fore as clearly as piety in the Autobiography, Hattusili portrays himself as contrasting his enemies’ turpitude in every way (see Archi 1971, 187). They act aggressively out of jealousy; he acts defensively out of necessity. They attack in a clandestine manner; he announces his intentions “like a man” (iii 68’). Hattusili attempts to avoid conflict, but even when he is compelled to resort to violence he does so in an appropriate way: “But when I became his enemy, still I did nothing impure” (iii 66’).

He creates a rhetorical framework in which worldly success, divine favor, and moral rectitude are inextricably intertwined; likewise failure, divine displeasure,

on him in battle. David, meanwhile, is far away when Saul perishes during a conflict with the Philistines (1 Sam 31–2 Sam 1).

92. On this topic, Gurney writes, “If the reasoning appears transparently unsound, that is only because we have long since ceased to believe that war is an ‘ordeal,’ in which the just cause must prevail; but, as we have already seen, this doctrine was axiomatic to the Hittites, and to them the reasoning of Hattusilis would have carried conviction” (1964, 176–77). Although I do believe that “ordeal of war” ideology carried more weight in certain cultures of antiquity than in modern western civilization, I expect that such thinking has always had its detractors and do not imagine that many Hittite hearers would have been immediately convinced of Hattusili’s propriety on this basis alone.

and depravity cannot be separated.⁹³ By linking success and morality to the religious sphere, he creates a defense that one cannot counter. To question Hattusili's righteousness is to question the gods.

Having described this basic legitimation, let us now look at how Hattusili defends himself against the two specific charges leveled against him.

Hattusili usurped the throne from the rightful king, Urhi-Tessup. This accusation undoubtedly plagued Hattusili from the outset of his reign. The circumstantial evidence appeared to condemn him. After his brother died, he gathered those who supported him, declared war on his nephew, ousted him, and took the throne for himself. Everything pointed to an illicit coup fueled by Hattusili's desire for power. Hattusili refutes this with a variety of arguments.

He combats the treason charge most directly by appealing to his constant loyalty to his brother and to Hatti. He claims that he was Muwatalli's right-hand man throughout his reign—a claim that most historians accept—and uses the bulk of the text (§§4–10b) to back this up.⁹⁴ Hattusili won countless battles while administering the Upper Land under his brother's auspices; he supported his brother as a loyal vassal during the conflict with Egypt (§9); he respected his brother's judgment in the Arma-Tarhunta case (§10a); and he even installed his brother's designated successor after he died (§10b). Hattusili points to a record of unimpeachable fidelity. He supported Muwatalli throughout his entire reign, and he supported Urhi-Tessup as well. He would be the last person in Hatti to commit treason.

Having established his loyalty at great length, the next step in Hattusili's defense involves the common motif of the unworthy predecessor. Hattusili did not outvie Urhi-Tessup for the throne; he assumed the throne only after Urhi-Tessup vacated it by his own illicit actions. Hattusili does not question Urhi-Tessup's initial legitimacy.⁹⁵ Instead, he focuses on Urhi-Tessup's aggression against him after the succession was appropriately administered. At this point the divine providence

93. This ideological orientation, while not always amenable to modern sensibilities, resembles the perspective seen in such biblical works as the Deuteronomistic History and Proverbs.

94. Archi writes in this regard, "This motif of the bonds and continuity with his brother is one of the most frequent in the apology itself" (1971, 201; see also Wolf 1967, 69–72).

95. *Contra* several Hittitologists. Suggesting that Hattusili seeks to delegitimize Urhi-Tessup in the passage describing his enthronement contradicts the rhetoric he uses. Hattusili takes credit (probably without justification) for installing Urhi-Tessup on the throne; if the latter were not the legal successor, this would reflect just as poorly on Hattusili. He declares himself responsible for Urhi-Tessup's coronation precisely because of Urhi-Tessup's legitimacy. Since Hattusili stresses his loyalty to his brother throughout the Autobiography (cf. iii 31'), this is another opportunity to prove it, by taking responsibility for a legitimate succession. Moreover, mentioning his support of Urhi-Tessup further highlights the absurdity of Urhi-Tessup's suspicions in the following paragraphs.

The contention that Hattusili casts aspersions on Urhi-Tessup's initial legitimacy stems

that enabled Hattusili's prosperity every step of the way nearly backfired, for he was so successful that he made the new king jealous: "But when Urhi-Tessup noted the goodness [of the goddess] for me, he envied me [and] he har[med] me" (iii 54'–56').⁹⁶ Urhi-Tessup began to "diminish" (*tepnu*-; alternatively "humiliate," COS 1.77:203) Hattusili, revoking his control of the Upper Land. Despite this unprovoked malicious behavior, Hattusili remained loyal to the throne and refused to sink to Urhi-Tessup's level. Through his moral superiority Hattusili employs yet another motif, this time that of the transcendent nonretaliator, writing "So out [o]f respect for my brother I did not retaliate accordingly, [a]nd for seven years I was tolerant" (iii 61'–62'). Even Hattusili's restraint had limits, however, and when Urhi-Tessup sought to complete his diminution by taking away his final two cities—Hakpis, where Hattusili reigned as vassal king, and Neriq, a city that held special importance for him (van den Hout 1995a, 1113) and where he served as *sanga*-priest—Hattusili had no choice but to stand up for himself. Still, Hattusili attempts to maintain the moral high ground even when initiating armed conflict, and he therefore couches the battle in the terminology of a lawsuit. Hattusili emphasizes that his rebellion is entirely appropriate and lawful; it is not simple mutiny but the ordeal of war to determine which party is in the right (see Liverani 2001, 105).

The gods inevitably confirm Hattusili's appropriate position and abandon Urhi-Tessup. The Autobiography's description of the conflict equivocates in re-

primarily from the meaning of *ḫ ūiḫuššuwali* in iii 40' of the Autobiography. I treat this enigmatic term thoroughly in Knapp 2015; here I will summarize that investigation.

The term *ḫ ūiḫuššuwali* appears only here and in one other Hittite text, a fragmentary inscription of Hattusili III that mostly parallels the Autobiography. In both texts, Hattusili states that his brother, Muwatalli, had no *ḫ ūiḫuššuwali* son, so he (Hattusili) placed Urhi-Tessup on the throne. The word has most frequently been translated "legitimate" (HHw: 52; COS 1.77:202; Imparati 1995, 148; Otten 1981, 21, 98; CHD L–N: 423 sub *nawi* b.1'; Wolf 1967, 68; Sturtevant and Bechtel 1935, 84), but the context militates against this. Urhi-Tessup was a "son of a concubine" (DUMU *EŠERTI*, iii 41'), which qualified as legitimate in every meaningful way. (Moreover, if the succession rules stipulated by the Proclamation of Telipinu held sway in Hattusili's day—which is not certain, since the two use different terminology—this would reinforce Urhi-Tessup's candidacy for the throne since he was presumably of the "second rank"; see Hawkins 2001, 176; Klengel 1998, 226; COS 1.77:202 n. 47; van den Hout 1995a, 1113; Bin-Nun 1975, 227).

Following Götze (1967, 27, 47, 119) and Singer (2002a, 744–45; 2001, 403), I translate *ḫ ūiḫuššuwali*, "adult." By this interpretation, Muwatalli had no "first-rank" son who was of age, which left Urhi-Tessup as the first in line among eligible candidates. Hattusili, therefore, fulfilled his obligations as a brother, uncle, and Hittite by installing Urhi-Tessup on the throne.

96. This, of course, almost exactly parallels Saul's response to David's growing success. It is interesting, however, that Hattusili attributes Urhi-Tessup's negative reaction to jealousy, while David's apologist attributes Saul's negative reaction primarily to fear (1 Sam 18:6–16).

gard to Hattusili's actual role: "[Ishtar] left Urhi-Tessup no alternative, nothing whatever, and she imprisoned him in Samuha like a pig in a sty. But as for me—the Kaskaean who had been (my) enemies, they supported me, and all Hattusa supported me. (But) out of respect for my brother I did nothing at all" (iv 24–30). As with the prior situation with Arma-Tarhunta, divine providence takes care of everything and Hattusili's conduct remains impeccable. He concludes this defense by portraying himself as the merciful victor, refusing to execute his predecessor and instead banishing him to the far reaches of the empire.

The rhetoric of Hattusili's response to the accusation of usurpation is unique among the apologies in this study.⁹⁷ Instead of denying his involvement in the coup, he celebrates it as a tangible demonstration of the divine providence that guided him from his days as a sickly youth to becoming the great king of Hatti.⁹⁸ By translating all political events into the religious sphere he shifts the responsibility for Urhi-Tessup's dismissal from the kingship from himself to Urhi-Tessup. Hattusili restrained himself as long as he could in good conscience. It was not until Urhi-Tessup forced his hand that he retaliated, and when he did so he followed appropriate legal protocol so as to avoid any possible treasonous action. His nephew disqualified himself from kingship; only afterward did Hattusili step in.

Hattusili mistreated the household of Arma-Tarhunta. It is difficult to assess the status of this charge at the time of the composition of the Autobiography, but its repeated mentions demonstrate that Hattusili felt compelled to address the issue. He describes a legal dispute⁹⁹ between Arma-Tarhunta and himself appar-

97. Although it does share elements of several others. Hattusili's justification, rather than denial, of ousting Urhi-Tessup can be compared to Solomon's defense of having Adonijah executed, but Solomon's apology lacks the religious element of Hattusili's (which is why Solomon must portray himself as a pawn of Nathan and Bathsheba rather than the instigator of his coup). Another apology with a similar interaction between the apologist and his predecessor is Darius's Bisitun Inscription, though the means of character assassination employed in the two differ markedly.

98. Of the four strategies of self-defense delineated by Ware and Linkugel, the most frequently used in ancient Near Eastern royal apologies was apparently denial, especially in regard to the demise of one's opponents (with David's apology providing the example *par excellence*—although if David were innocent of these crimes he would have little choice, of course). Hattusili adopts the strategy of transcendence, defined as "any strategy which cognitively joins some fact, sentiment, object, or relationship with some larger context within which the audience does not presently view that attribute" (Ware and Linkugel 1973, 280). Hattusili's defense "transcends" by portraying Urhi-Tessup as the aggressor, fueled by jealousy due to Hattusili's prosperity. Of the two basic strategies I pay attention to in the defenses, this is obviously transformative rather than reformative.

99. The expression "my brother Muwatalli named me to the wheel" (i 35–36) appears to refer to a legal procedure in which the defendant had to be judged by the king (Archi 2000, 17–18; cf. Tatišvili 2010, 356–57; also *HED* H: 400 sub *h urki*). It is also worth noting that the two extant exemplars vary slightly regarding the "wheel." Exemplar A of the Autobiography

ently at the outset of his rise (§4), a situation in which Arma-Tarhunta sought vengeance against him via sorcery (§9), another lawsuit of Arma-Tarhunta against him (§10a),¹⁰⁰ and Arma-Tarhunta's son, Sipaziti, siding with Urhi-Tessup during the rebellion (§10c). Though the precise chronological sequence eludes us (Klengel 1998, 209 n. 323), most of these conflicts between Hattusili and the household of Arma-Tarhunta occurred during the reigns of Muwatalli and Urhi-Tessup. But even if this charge had lost some of its liveliness after the firm establishment of Hattusili's reign, it is possible that certain scions of Arma-Tarhunta bore a grudge against Hattusili.¹⁰¹ Given the net result of the rivalry—Arma-Tarhunta's family lost control of the Upper Land (§4), his wife and one son were exiled to Cyprus (= Alasiya; §10a), half his household was confiscated and donated to Ishtar (§§10a, 12c), and Sipaziti was banished (§11)—one need not struggle to come up with reasons for Arma-Tarhunta's progeny to dislike the new king of Hatti. If this is so, Hattusili's declaration of innocence in these matters could have been aimed at pacifying such a party.

As with the Urhi-Tessup affair, Hattusili responds to the charge of misconduct against Arma-Tarhunta by declaring himself the victim. He did not participate in the demotion of Arma-Tarhunta, he just loyally obeyed his brother's commands and assumed the post over the Upper Land. Arma-Tarhunta assaulted him out of jealousy, and when punishment did lie within Hattusili's discretion, he exercised leniency. He never retaliated against Arma-Tarhunta himself: "And, because my brother elevated me over [Arma-Tar]hunta through this case, I did not retaliate against him. And Arma-Tarhunta, [be]cause he was a blood relative to me, and because he was an old man [and] he caused me to pity (him), I let him go. [And] Sipaziti, his [son], I let go also. I did nothing whatsoever to them" (iii 22–28). His response to those associated with Arma-Tarhunta was likewise characterized by restraint; he elected exile over execution and allowed the household to retain some

provides the wood determinative for "wheel" (^{GI}UMBIN, KUB I 1 i 36) while Exemplar B preserves a divine determinative (^dUMBIN, ABoT I 62 i 32). Archi explains the variant as follows: "the variant ^dUMBIN in the manuscript B ... alludes to the fact that Hattusili pretended to have been 'cleared by a deity,' *nu DINGIR^{LIM}-za parkueššun*" (2000, 18).

100. Alternatively, van den Hout interprets this passage to refer to a reopening of Arma-Tarhunta's former lawsuit (COS 1.77:202; van den Hout 1998, 54–55).

101. Three sources beyond the Autobiography discuss the forfeiture of Arma-Tarhunta's property, further testifying to the importance of this issue. One text describes an investigation of "the killing of part of the personnel of Armatarḫ unta's estate, freemen and slaves alike" (van den Hout 1998, 62), suggesting Hattusili may not have been as merciful as he described himself to be in the Autobiography. A text of Tudhaliya "seeks the approval of the gods to compensate Armatarḫ unta for his loss of property" (van den Hout 1998, 64). If the controversy persisted to the time of Hattusili's successor, it must have remained a thorn in Hattusili's side throughout his reign.

of its holdings.¹⁰² Here again Hattusili hopes to win support by portraying himself as the merciful victor.

Finally, in the dedicatory section of the text, Hattusili hands over the confiscated property of Arma-Tarhunta to Ishtar. This could serve several purposes. It most likely served to reward a group of his supporters in the city Samuha (see §4.4 below), but it also may have constituted a sincere gesture of appreciation for Ishtar's providence throughout Hattusili's rise. Furthermore, it reinforced Hattusili's religiosity to the public, showing his reverence and sponsorship of the Hittite cult. Finally, it could be a subtle rhetorical ploy directed at those who held him responsible for Arma-Tarhunta's fall from grace, demonstrating that he did not seek to benefit from his rival's downfall.

No scholar doubts the tendentious nature of Hattusili's apology, but there is no consensus verdict regarding his plea of innocence, especially in the case of treason against Urhi-Tessup. Many are quick to censure him; Tadmor, for example, declares the text a justification for "an obviously illegitimate act" (1983, 55).¹⁰³ Others cautiously accept his basic claims, such as Wolf, who concludes, "Nevertheless, from an overall standpoint, it probably represents a picture of the facts that is close to the truth" (1967, 98). With only one side of the story, it seems most prudent at this point to abstain from judgment (cf. Archi 1971, 186). That Hattusili actively sought the great kingship is by no means definite. If he had, one wonders why he did not seize the throne at the moment of his brother's death, given his considerable influence at the time. On the other hand, one struggles to explain why Urhi-Tessup would have relentlessly provoked him had Hattusili truly supported his succession. If Urhi-Tessup did insist on poking the bear, he was the architect of his own demise.¹⁰⁴

102. Hoffner attributes this lenience to the fact that "the situation was still too delicate and the stakes for survival too high" (1975, 54). He also attributes Hattusili's "gentle treatment" of Sipaziti to their consanguinity (1975, 55). This may be correct, but we do not have enough knowledge of the situation to make certain judgments.

103. Götze goes further, detailing how Hattusili manipulated events en route to the kingship from as early as the beginning of his brother's reign (*CAH* 2/2, 127–29, 256–57).

104. Most scholars do attribute Urhi-Tessup's downfall to his own poor judgment, at least to some extent. "Muršiliš III [= Urhi-Tessup] had inspired little loyalty (even in his own brother), had earned the contempt of statesmen for his erratic policy, had removed from a position of power a highly successful administrator in the person of his uncle, who, as we have seen, does not seem to have posed much of a threat to the then King. However we may choose to feel about legitimacy and usurpation, there is a [*sic*] little doubt that from a purely practical standpoint the nobles chose the proper course [in supporting Hattusili]" (V. Parker 1999, 290).

4.4 THE *SITZ IM LEBEN* OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF HATTUSILI III

Determining the *Sitz im Leben* of the Autobiography is a complicated task and in some ways presents a microcosm of the difficulty involved in establishing the “original” setting of any apology from the ancient Near East. This is because there is a disconnect between the stated purpose of the text, which derives from its literary genre as a dedicatory inscription, and the implicit aims of legitimation and self-justification, which derive from its apologetic mode.¹⁰⁵ Superficially, the text poses no problems. It opens with a typical titulary (§1) and introduces the theme of Ishtar’s divine providence at the outset (§2). It concludes with an edict covering a cultic donation; Hattusili “hands over” (*parā pai-*) to Ishtar the estate of Arma-Tarhunta, a mausoleum (if this is the correct interpretation of the enigmatic *ḫ aštiyašĒ-er*, iv 75), and his son Tudhaliya for service (§12c). He also exempts those in the service of Ishtar of Samuha from corvée service (§13), and concludes the text with a standard formula (§14). All this is standard form for a royal decree making a grant to a cult center, and we have numerous other examples from Hatti and beyond (see Güterbock 1938, 94; also Imparati 1995, 144–45). The confusion stems from the historiographical narrative that connects the introduction and the concluding grant. While most dedicatory inscriptions contain some sort of narrative demonstrating the worthiness of the grantee, the narrative of the Autobiography is disproportionately long (constituting nearly 90% of the entire document) and focuses on Hattusili’s life (hence the label “Autobiography”). The document does praise the providence of Ishtar as it sets out to do (i 5), but it also blatantly serves as a defense of Hattusili’s seizure of the throne of Hatti from his nephew. The apologetic nature of the Autobiography is so transparent that some

105. There has been much debate over the literary genre, or form, of the Autobiography. Wolf dedicates half a chapter of his dissertation to establishing the form, concluding that “apology” is most appropriate—despite the lack of any parallels (1967, 12–22). More recently, van den Hout notes that “The composition is notoriously difficult to categorize as to its genre . . . The text may be described as a decree instituting the cult of the goddess Ishtar, appointing Hattušili’s son Tudhaliya and future descendants as her priests, and granting tax freedom to her temple, all this more than amply justified by Ishtar’s divine providence which Hattušili claims to have experienced in his rise to power, so that the composition takes on the character of a eulogy to Ishtar, but above all an apology as well as a religious legitimization of his usurpation” (COS 1.77:199). Such vacillation, which characterizes nearly all treatments of the Autobiography, is symptomatic of the confusion between literary genre (determined primarily on the basis of form) and rhetorical genre (determined primarily by exigence). The Autobiography has a clear literary genre (dedicatory inscription or decree) and a clear rhetorical genre (apologetic); the true question of the composition’s origin concerns the relationship of these two. For more on this distinction, see §1.5. As this study should show, there was no formal category of apologetic in the ancient Near East, so apologies were always embedded within other types of text.

scholars consider the decree merely a vehicle for disseminating Hattusili's self-justification. Three quarters of a century ago, Güterbock observed,

Auch der 'Große Text' des Hattušili gibt sich als Erlaß über dieselbe Angelegenheit (Kol. IV 81ff.), aber er sprengt bereits diesen Rahmen; der historische Bericht wird hier zum Hauptzweck. Allerdings steht er, im Gegensatz zu den Annalen, unter einem bestimmten Thema: 'Von dem Walten der Ishtar will ich sprechen.' Aber jeder spürt bei der Lektüre, daß das nur die Einkleidung ist für den eigentlichen Zweck des Textes: die Usurpation des Hattušili zu rechtfertigen. Diese Absicht und die politische Geschicklichkeit des Verfassers spricht so deutlich aus jeder Zeile des Textes, daß es kein Hineintragen moderner Anschauungen bedeutet, wenn man den Text in dieser Weise beurteilt. (Güterbock 1938: 94–95)

I will evaluate this below, but we must first acknowledge the connection between the decree and the apology. The text is dedicated to Ishtar, and the events from Hattusili's life that are included reflect the goddess's repeated intervention on his behalf. A comparison of the Autobiography to other texts of Hattusili reveals this clearly. The fragmentary KBo IV 12 preserves a decree honoring the family of Mittannamuwa, chief scribe of Hattusa. Like the Autobiography, this text preserves an account of Hattusili's boyhood illness, but note the difference in how it is portrayed in each as illustrated in table 1.

The Autobiography emphasizes Ishtar's providential role in sustaining Hattusili through the infirmity, but KBo IV 12 describes the assistance of Mittannamuwa. Both texts highlight the role played by the recipient of the honor bestowed by the text, the respective divine and human contributors to Hattusili's recovery. One can also contrast the events included in the Autobiography with those in KBo VI 29+, another text depicting events from Hattusili's life.¹⁰⁶ The two compositions contain much of the same information regarding the Urhi-Tessup affair, but the latter completely ignores the various encounters with the household of Arma-Tarhunta that dominate much of the Autobiography. Arma-Tarhunta doubtless receives such attention in the Autobiography because in it Hattusili dedicates his rival's estate to Ishtar. The beneficiary of Arma-Tarhunta's confiscated property may also be a clue to the purpose of this text. Hattusili maintained power through, among other things, "the concession of benefits to his supporters" (Pecchioli Daddi 2006, 118). One might locate the specific occasion of the commissioning of the Autobiography as such a concession for services rendered. We know from KBo VI 29 that the citizens of Samuha actively participated in Hattusili's rebellion. The pertinent text reads, "[Urhi-Tessup] went to Samuha. And I came afterward, and when I arrived

106. The conclusion of KBo VI 29+ is unfortunately missing. Its similarity to the Autobiography suggests that it too may have been a dedicatory inscription, but we can only guess at the object of dedication. For an edition of this text, see Götze 1925, 44–51, 106–10.

Table 1. Contrasting Accounts of Hattusili's Boyhood Illness

Autobiography i 9–21	KBo IV 12 i 5–12 ^a
My father Mursili begot us four children—Halpasulupi, Muwatalli, Hattusili, and Massanauzzi, a daughter. Of all these I was the youngest child, and as long as I was still a boy (lit. “son/child”), I was a “one-of-the-reins.” (Then) Ishtar, my lady, sent my brother Muwatalli to my father Mursili through a dream, saying, “For Hattusili years are short; he will not live (long). Now give him over to me, and let him be for me a <i>šankunni</i>-priest, and he will live.” So my father took me, (his) son, and handed me over to the goddess for service, and to the goddess, as a <i>šankunni</i>-priest, I made offerings. At the hand of Ishtar, my lady, I experienced pleasant things, and Ishtar, my lady, took me by the hand and I was sustained by her.	At the time of my father, (while I was) a small boy (lit. “son/child”), an evil illness (overcame) me. So my father gave me over to Mittanā(muwa), the chief scribe, and he prayed^b for me and he caused me to recover (lit. “live”) from the illness. And Mittanamūwa was a recognized person by my father. When he caused me to recover (lit. “live”) from the illness, he (i.e., Mursili II) recognized him on my account, and you therefore received special recognition.

a. For an edition of this text, see Götze 1925, 40–45, 106–7.

b. I translate *anda dāriyat* here as “prayed” due to context. Götze translates “besprach” (1925, 41), commenting “... ‘besprechen’ als ärztliche Behandlung. Die Rituale stützen eine solche Übersetzung aufs beste” (1925, 106).

in Suluppa, the lords and *support* people who were with him approached me and said to me, ‘We will go; we will kill him; and we will bring (his) head to you.’ (But) I did not allow it, so they did not kill him” (ii 20–28). Hattusili may have intended his patronage of the cult of Ishtar of Samuha as a reward for this act.

The connection to the cult of Samuha also relates to the text’s religiosity. The ubiquitous mentions of Ishtar’s providence in the Autobiography serve to justify his honoring her cult with this decree, which explains why this particular inscription contains such an elaborate apology. Because he based the defense of his legitimacy on Ishtar’s providence, this text that functioned as “a eulogy to Ishtar” (COS 1.77:199) was inevitably suffused with apologetic elements. This leads to a chicken-or-egg question: Is the apology simply a byproduct of Hattusili’s desire to honor Ishtar of Samuha, or was the endowment itself just a “pretext” (to borrow Archi’s term¹⁰⁷) for disseminating propaganda? One clue suggests the latter. Whereas a

107. “What makes the Autobiography a unique document is that the ostensible reason for its composition is only a pretext for propagating instead a certain view of the facts which go beyond those which constitute the terms of the foundation, and which outweigh them

decree need not address a wide audience, in the introduction Hattusili expresses his desire that this text be distributed: “The providence of Ishtar I will speak. Let humanity hear it!” (ŠA ^dIŠTAR *parā ḫ andandatar memaḫḫ i n≈at* DUMU.NAM. LÚ.U₁₉.LU-*aš ištamašdu*, i 5–6). One could ignore this as an excess of grandiloquence, but the manuscripts themselves suggest otherwise. The Autobiography is one of the best-attested Hittite texts, with too many extant copies surviving to attribute to the accident of discovery. The scribes attached more importance to the Autobiography than other standard decrees, a fact that points to its entrenched place within the Hittite canon.

Unfortunately, one cannot specify any further regarding the origins of the Autobiography. One can only speculate as to its date, despite several attempts to place it late in Hattusili’s life.¹⁰⁸ The precise situation that motivated Hattusili to commission this defense of his legitimacy and his innocence in the downfalls of Arma-Tarḫ unta and Urhi-Tessup must remain a mystery.

in importance. For here are given the events which lead to a coup d’état, and which are to justify it” (Archi 1971, 186; cf. Wolf 1967, 18–19; Gurney 1964, 175).

108. On the basis of iv 58–59 (“Those who were enemies of my fathers (and) gran[d-f]athers, th[ey s]ought peace with me”), Otten asserted that the twenty-first year of Ramses II (ca. 1256 BCE) can serve as a *terminus a quo* for the composition of the Autobiography (1981, 27; others point to a date late in Hattusili’s reign apparently for the same reason; *HST* 115, 267; Imparati 1995, 153–54; Tadmor 1983, 54–55). This need not refer to the treaty with Ramses, however; it could be a generic expression.

I do not follow Houwink ten Cate’s argument for dating the text late in Hattusili’s reign on the basis of its dedication of Tudhaliya to Ishtar (1992, 265–67 n. 47). Houwink ten Cate draws parallels between the careers of Hattusili and Tudhaliya, and creates the following trajectory for Tudhaliya: prince and army commander > *tuh kanti* > priest of Neriq > priest of Ishtar of Samuha > designated successor. This seems odd since *tuh kanti* and successor are essentially synonymous. Moreover, dedication to Ishtar was the first step of Hattusili’s rise, so I struggle to understand why Houwink ten Cate presumes it was the penultimate step to Tudhaliya’s designation as successor.

I likewise object to Imparati’s argument (which draws on Houwink ten Cate’s) that the primary motivation of the Autobiography was to designate Tudhaliya as Hattusili’s successor. There is no evidence at all for this; Tudhaliya barely appears in the text. The purpose of designating a successor is for the king to make his intentions publicly known to secure loyalty to the successor; if that is the goal of the Autobiography it fails. There is no announcement and no attempt to secure fealty.

If the dedication of Tudhaliya were in fact a significant factor in the Autobiography’s composition, that strikes me as evidence for a date shortly after Hattusili’s accession. Hattusili would have wanted to place Tudhaliya in a strategic position to gain standing, and the priesthood of Ishtar of Samuha would have made sense in this regard. My proposal above, that the Autobiography was composed in the context of rewarding the citizens of Samuha for delivering Urhi-Tessup during the coup, also would point to an early date for the Autobiography.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE TRADITIONS OF DAVID'S RISE AND REIGN

THE TRADITIONS OF David's Rise and Reign (hereafter TDRR) does not refer to a discrete composition like the other texts in this study. Instead, it is my designation for a collection of units of text within 1 Sam 16–1 Kgs 2 (incorporating much of the traditionally defined History of David's Rise and Succession Narrative), which provide the biblical story of David. I use the plural traditions to emphasize that I do not consider all of the early narrative material about David to be the residue of a single apologetic composition. I envision assorted early sources, some of which were commissioned for apologetic purposes. Since I do not consider it possible to isolate the individual sources with precision, I attempt to deal with the early narrative traditions in their entirety instead of focusing on a single text as I do with the other rulers. But I do not intend to imply that the material treated in this chapter ever circulated as an individual, discrete unit.¹

Because of the composite nature of this "text" and because it provides our only viable source for biographical details about the historical David, I employ a different methodology in this chapter than in the others. My starting point is a source-critical analysis of 1 Sam 16–1 Kgs 2, through which I delineate the contents of TDRR. Since it is typically easier to diagnose inauthenticity of a text than authenticity,² I define TDRR negatively; that is, I exclude units of text of demonstrably late origin while retaining units of text whose origin is not immediately apparent. This analysis appears in §5.2. My second step is the apologetic analysis

1. This approach contrasts with that of McCarter, who begins his study by isolating one particular source (HDR = 1 Sam 16:14–2 Sam 5:10*) and subjecting that to individual analysis (1980b, 493). Although I do not doubt that such sources existed, I am less optimistic about our ability to isolate them.

2. I use the term "authentic" to describe a text that reflects the setting and concerns of the period that it describes (in this case, the tenth century BCE). This does not involve any evaluative judgment on the historical contents of the given text—a text may be contemporary and historiographical but ideologically driven and of dubious historical worth. Such a text would still qualify as authentic. Neither does my use of "authentic" demand that a text was written in the tenth century. Traditions may have survived first as oral compositions and only later been written down. The nature and extent of scribal culture in tenth-century Palestine is a difficult issue that is outside the realm of this study.

of TDRR, which I perform below in §5.3. Having done this, I then examine the *Sitz im Leben* of the text with special emphasis on the date of TDRR, while acknowledging that the results are only broadly applicable due to the diversity of material within this complex. This appears in §5.4. Only then can one address the issue of the historicity of David's rule. Thus §5.1 builds on, rather than lays the foundation for, the following sections. Nevertheless, I commence this chapter with an historical sketch of David's accession to conform to the format used elsewhere.

5.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF DAVID'S ACCESSION

Just half a century ago, the consensus scholarly view of David was superlative. He was a magnificent warrior, whose victory over the Philistine giant Goliath won him such acclaim that "the popularity of the young hero ... finally drove [his predecessor] Saul beyond the bounds of rational behavior" (Bright 1959, 171). He became king and as such became the architect of an empire, transforming Israel from a small backwoods monarchy to a domain reaching from the Sinai desert in the south to the outskirts of the Neo-Hittite kingdoms in the north, from the Mediterranean Sea in the west to the Transjordanian desert in the east (Bright 1959, 183). More than this, he was a religious reformer who developed Yahwism into a national religion equipped with an elaborate priesthood and a unifying symbol, the ark.³ But such views have all but vanished from mainstream scholarship. The growing tendency to date certain strands of the Hebrew Bible to the end of the monarchic period and later, combined with the work of several Syro-Palestinian archaeologists who question the evidence for a Palestinian state prior to the ninth century BCE, has led most scholars to move in one of two directions, so that today there exists a pair of schools of thought about David. The first school could be characterized as having evolved from the earlier consensus model. In this school lie those scholars who assert that a significant portion of 1–2 Samuel derives from an historiographical document or documents composed during, or shortly after, the lifetime of a tenth-century Israelite ruler named David. Working from this premise, a critical reading of the biblical text can reveal much of the character of this king. The majority of mainstream scholars would probably still subscribe to this school, but a second has gained more adherents in recent decades. In this school lie those scholars who reject the earlier consensus model entirely. Instead, they propose that the stories of 1–2 Samuel are fictional accounts composed centuries after the time period in question, and it would be a mistake to ascribe to the biblical record any historical value at all. According to this school, David could be

3. "Where Saul had neglected the Ark and driven its priesthood from him, David established both Ark and priesthood in the official national shrine. It was a master stroke. It must have done more to bind the feelings of the tribes to Jerusalem than we can possibly imagine" (Bright 1959, 180).

no more than a name drawn from ages past, and neither he nor any other person-ages from this time period, nor even such geopolitical entities as Judah and Israel, should be regarded as historical realities.⁴

In light of this division, beginning a discussion of David with an historical account of his accession (and reign) is perhaps backward, but I will do so here to cohere to the format of my treatment of the other apologies. The fact that I write this historical section at all demonstrates that I subscribe to the first of the two schools described above, and I am willing to employ the Hebrew Bible as an historical resource. My justification for describing an historical David will become clear below, especially in my discussion of the *Sitz im Leben* of this text.

In fact, when writing about the historical David, the Hebrew Bible is not *a* resource, but *the* resource. Extrabiblical sources are almost entirely silent concerning him—apart from a few passing references on steles erected outside Israel and over a century after his death, there is no mention of David anywhere in history that does not find the Bible as its ultimate source.⁵ The following examination, therefore, is the product of an historical-critical exegesis of the biblical record.⁶ The history provided here will be necessarily brief in order to stay within the confines of events that can be established with a high degree of confidence. I will refrain from exploring such issues as the parties responsible for the various murders and the motivations and ambitions of those involved—the main stuff of the biblical narrative, and the heart of the apologetic presentation—until the apologetic analysis below (§5.3).

David lived in the early to mid-tenth century BCE. His origins remain mysterious. He is referred to throughout the Hebrew Bible as the “son of Jesse the Bethlehemite”; though his father is unknown, the patronymic itself has suggested to some that he came from a family of means (Halpern 2001, 271).⁷ The earliest

4. I need not list the various scholars on each side of the debate here; for more on the scholarly division see the summary article by Grabbe (2000; he deals with the age of David and Solomon specifically on pp. 208–12); Kelle and Moore have also recently provided an excellent overview of the state of the field with regard to David's historicity (2011, 232–44). In this chapter I necessarily interact primarily with those who ascribe at least a modicum of historical worth to the biblical text, though I also attempt to respond at points to the work of the prominent revisionist John Van Seters.

5. For more on this point, see McCarter 1986a, 117–18. McCarter's remarks here are examined more closely in McKenzie 2000a, 10–24.

6. Here and throughout this chapter I appeal almost exclusively to the account of David in the books of Samuel and Kings since his portrayal in Chronicles, Psalms, and elsewhere provides less historical information (cf. McKenzie 2000a, 36–43). My methodology broadly follows that described by McKenzie (2000a, 44–46).

7. This is not at odds with the contention of others that David's entry into the royal entourage was dictated by “economic pressures on his family” (McKenzie 2000a, 67; see McCarter 1986a, 119–20).

biblical traditions characterize him as having training in both music (1 Sam 16:18, 23) and warfare (1 Sam 16:18, 21), and through these abilities he ascended to become a prominent member of the court of Saul, ruler of Israel.⁸ As his acclaim spread (1 Sam 18:6–9, 13–16) he received the loyalty of the people,⁹ which in turn led to a rift with his sovereign.¹⁰ David left Saul's court¹¹ and spent a period of time in the wilderness, during which he gathered a small force of outlaws and lived as a bandit lord (1 Sam 22:1–2).¹² His relationship with Saul continued to deteriorate so that he eventually hired out his men as a mercenary band to Achish, the Philistine king of Gath, and they survived by raiding the people of the surrounding region (1 Sam 27:1–11). David used the wealth he plundered from these raids to purchase the favor of certain Judahite elders (1 Sam 30:26–31), and he eventually left his Philistine patron¹³ and journeyed to Hebron, where he was anointed king of Judah (2 Sam 2:1–4).

8. McKenzie suggests that the image of David as a shepherd developed later in the tradition as a result of the common metaphor of king as shepherd (2000a, 47–51; cf. McCarter 1986a, 119–20); note that the iconic image of David as a shepherd originates from the pericope of his anointment by Samuel in 1 Sam 16:1–13, a passage attributed by most to the later Prophetic Record.

9. The biblical mention that the people “loved” (אהב, 1 Sam 18:16) David has important political connotations; in the ancient Near East “love” signifies political loyalty. On this issue see the classic study by Moran (1963).

10. I suspect that David's fame grew due to how he acquitted himself in battle with the Philistines, as the biblical narrative states. This is admittedly hard to reconcile with his later positive connections to the Philistines, however (see 1 Sam 27:1–28:2). The historical ambiguity can be shown by contrasting the conclusions of McKenzie and Halpern. The former, while recognizing some legendary development in the Goliath tradition, asserts that “David did distinguish himself in battle against the Philistines, exhibiting exceptional skill and judgment in combat” (McKenzie 2000a, 88). Halpern, on the other hand, attributes all mention of David's combat against the Philistines to apologetic invention, concluding “All the signs thus point to a long and sincere Davidic commitment to the Philistines of Gath. This is why the apology repeatedly asserts that he is ‘the bone and flesh’ of the Israelites, their kin” (2001, 294).

11. McKenzie's suggestion that Saul turned on David because of a failed coup attempt perhaps reads too much between the lines here, though in his defense, he presents the idea as speculation (2000a, 86–88).

12. Many have remarked that during this phase of his life David resembles the *‘apirū* of the Late Bronze Age, a class of disenfranchised soldiers of fortune (see McCarter 1986a, 121–22). I hold that this analogy is most appropriate, and it plays into the charges laid against David (see below, §5.3).

13. For the phenomenon of patronage in the ancient Near East, see Westbrook 2005. He does not use the relationship of David and Achish as one of his examples, but it fits his description of patronage well.

In the meantime, Saul was killed (1 Sam 31:1–2 Sam 1:16), leaving the throne of Israel to his son Ish-Baal¹⁴ (2 Sam 2:8–9). War broke out between those who followed the house of David and those who followed the house of Saul (2 Sam 3:1), but the position of the latter weakened when a conflict developed between Ish-Baal and the commander of Saul's army, Abner (2 Sam 3:7–11). Abner maintained military control and wielded much of the power (2 Sam 3:6). When both Abner and Ish-Baal became the victims of assassination (2 Sam 3:12–39 and 4:1–12 respectively), the Israelites were kingless and they turned to David to fill the office (2 Sam 5:1–3), even though his involvement was suspected in both crimes (cf. 2 Sam 16:5–8). Thus David united the Judahites and Israelites into a single political entity, the united monarchy.

David already had much to defend himself against (or “apologize” for, so to speak) at this point in his career, but we must also include a few select events of his later reign in this historical survey to background the entire breadth of his apology. Of much significance to this study is David's treatment of the Saulides after consolidating the kingdom. Saul's son and successor Ish-Baal had met his end, but several scions of the house of Saul remained alive, a situation to which David responded by handing seven of them over to the Gibeonites to be executed (2 Sam 21:1–9).¹⁵ One further Saulide remained, Merib-Baal,¹⁶ whom David removed from his estate and brought under the protection of the palace (2 Sam 9).¹⁷

14. Saul's son and successor is consistently called Ishbosheth (אִישׁ-בִּשֶׁת, “Man of shame”) throughout 2 Samuel. His actual name, Ish-Baal (אִשְׁבַּעַל, “Man of Baal”), is preserved in 1 Chronicles (8:33, 9:39). It appears that a scribe modified the name either to avoid the Baal theophoric element or to disparage Saul's offspring.

15. The Gibeonites allegedly held a grudge against Saul because “he killed the Gibeonites” (2 Sam 21:1), though the event in question is not recorded anywhere in the Hebrew Bible (for more on this, see McCarter 1984, 441).

16. Like Ish-Baal, the name of Merib-Baal (“Baal contends”) appears to have been bowdlerized at some point in the transmission of 2 Samuel. In MT and most versions of LXX, the name appears throughout the book as Mephibosheth (מִפְיִבִּישֶׁת/מִפְּבִישֶׁת, “From the mouth of shame”), though the Lucianic manuscripts retain Mephi-Baal (μεμφίβααλ, “From the mouth of Baal”), as does the Old Latin. The MT of 1 Chronicles preserves the name as Merib-Baal (מֵרִיב-בַּעַל/מֵרִיב-בַּעַל, 9:40). What is certain is that Mephibosheth was not this man's given name; possibilities for the original include Merib-Baal, Mephi-Baal, or even Meri-Baal (“Baal is my lord”). I adopt the former. For more on this issue, see McCarter 1984, 124–25; he proposes that the confusion derived from two Saulide scions with similar names (Mephi-Baal and Merib-Baal). This conclusion may be correct but I do not follow it here.

17. This historical reconstruction presumes the basic historicity of both 2 Sam 9 and 21:1–14. If, however, one assumes only one Saulide descendant of the name Merib-Baal, the two accounts would be difficult to reconcile since someone by this name is among the Saulides executed by the Gibeonites (2 Sam 21:8). Overall, the biblical accounts of Merib-Baal do

Thus David effectively eliminated the house of Saul, the main obstacle to securing a dynasty for his newly won throne.

Two rebellions also took place during David's reign and merit comment. In the first, David's son Absalom exploited disaffection with his father's rule to develop a following among the Israelites (2 Sam 15:1–6, 13). He then traveled to Hebron, his birthplace (2 Sam 3:2–3) and the original seat of David's kingship, and had himself declared king (2 Sam 15:7–12). David fled with his personal guard (2 Sam 15:14–18), but won the day when his men met Absalom's in battle shortly thereafter, a skirmish in which Absalom was killed (2 Sam 18:1–18). In the second rebellion, percolating hostility between the Israelites and Judahites (2 Sam 19:10–15[9–14], 42–44[41–43]) erupted and the Israelites left David to follow a certain Sheba, son of Bichri, a Benjaminite (and thus of the tribe of Saul; 2 Sam 20:1–2). Joab pursued him to the town of Abel, where the residents delivered his head in order to escape being destroyed, and again unity was restored (2 Sam 20:10–22).

As for the other events of David's reign, the conquests he undertook and all he did, are they not written in the annals of the secondary literature?¹⁸ Documenting the life of the historical David became a popular topic among scholars in the last generation as new archaeological, textual, and other evidence demanded modifications of the long-standing consensus view of tenth-century Palestine. This work produced such treatments as McCarter 1986a (a brief work that essentially distilled the findings of his Samuel commentaries on the historical David into one article) and the monographs of McKenzie (2000a), Halpern (2001), and most recently Baden (2013). These biographies—especially the latter three—paint a portrait of David less flattering than the traditional image of the humble shepherd who achieved the throne almost despite himself.¹⁹ They do this largely by focusing

not easily harmonize. For more on the thorny literary and historical issues surrounding this figure, see §5.2.

18. I do not include above any assessment of the Davidic empire, a major sticking point of the revisionist historians, because questions about its nature and extent are difficult to answer historically and it has little bearing for this study. Suffice it to say here that the portrait in 1–2 Samuel of a fairly parochial tenth-century Palestinian chief/king conducting a series of successful campaigns into outlying regions does not strike me as historically objectionable (nor does it seem that such a phenomenon would leave a significant imprint in the material remains of the region). See also my remarks below; for other assessments see McCarter 1986a, 126–29; McKenzie 2000a, 146–49; Halpern 2001, 105–226.

19. McKenzie, for example, writes, “[David] could also be compared to other, more recent and more infamous Middle Eastern dictators, like Saddam Hussein. Both were clever politicians and military commanders. Both led outlaw bands that rivaled the ruling family. Both eventually replaced their rivals, leaving a trail of dead bodies behind. Both gained and retained power through military force” (2000a, 22). Halpern states, “The real David was not someone whom it would be wise to invite to dinner” (2001, 479), as is anticipated by the title of his book, *David's Secret Demons: Messiah, Murderer, Traitor, King*. Baden follows

on the accusations launched against David and finding him guilty almost every time.²⁰ We will examine the accusations anew below, but first comes the unenviable task of establishing what sources within the disparate biblical record provide the most reliable vehicle to assessing David's life.

5.2 THE TEXT

The character of the two biblical apologies under investigation in this study differs from that of the nonbiblical texts in three fundamental ways that render the former far more complex from a textual standpoint. First, whereas the nonbiblical texts (with the exception of the Proclamation of Telipinu) appear in inscriptions on artifacts whose creation can be comfortably dated to the period of the pertinent king, the apologies of David and Solomon appear only in the Hebrew Bible, a text whose earliest extant copies date two millennia after the formation and dissolution of any united monarchy.²¹ With such a chasm separating the preserved copies from the historical events they describe, our understanding of how the text developed over time must remain tentative. Even if we assume documents were written contemporary to the reigns of David and Solomon—an assumption many, perhaps most, biblical scholars would contest—we must account for the countless scribes who transmitted the text between the “original” autographs and the copies now extant.

Second, the nonbiblical apologies all assume the literary genre of royal inscription (with various subgenres, such as dedicatory inscription and victory inscription). Royal inscriptions employed a first-person perspective, indicating that they were commissioned (if not authored) by the king himself.²² The biblical narratives of David and Solomon employ a third-person perspective and defy any simple categorization in terms of literary genre. This is largely due to the third difference, that the nonbiblical apologies are embedded within individual, self-contained inscriptions while the biblical apologies appear within the Hebrew Bible, itself a library of ancient texts.

suit, asserting, “David was a successful monarch, but he was a vile human being” (2013, 259).

20. McCarter is more lenient with his verdict (1980b, 502 n. 24).

21. I refer here to the Masoretic Text (MT), the earliest complete manuscript(s) of the Hebrew Bible in Hebrew, which dates to ca. 1000 CE. Of course, the Dead Sea Scrolls provide a much earlier Hebrew text, but the manuscripts are far from complete. The Septuagint (LXX), the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, is preserved in relatively complete copies dating to as early as the fourth century CE. It therefore provides a witness much earlier than MT, but a step removed in terms of language.

22. Ancient pseudo-autobiographies do appear fairly commonly (see Longman 1991), but none of the texts in question is seriously considered to be a member of this category.

This final obstacle significantly impacts the study of the David narrative. The Hebrew Bible recounts David's life in the forty-two chapters of 1 Sam 16–1 Kgs 2,²³ but this section is not the work of a single author or even a single school. Instead, the account of David's life has the character of a bricolage, containing dozens of discrete units of text of sundry origin. Many of these units doubtless derive from common sources, so that one need not posit a separate hand for every unit of text, and a great deal of scholarship in the previous century was devoted to reconstructing original, independent, continuous sources underlying the biblical narrative. I will examine some of these reconstructions in the discussion in §5.2.2. Unfortunately, such reconstructions require much conjecture and are often little more than exercises in futility. I therefore employ a somewhat different approach in the following analysis. I acknowledge the existence of continuous sources and in some cases I think one can confidently identify an affinity among various units, but I do not attempt a rigorous delineation of separate narrative strands. Of greater importance for this study is adherence to authentic Davidic material. Thus, I exclude from my analysis units that are of demonstrably late origin.²⁴ This does not mean, of course, that every unit in the list below is contemporary to David himself, only that I reserve judgment at this point.²⁵

The list below therefore represents *potentially* early texts from the biblical narrative of David; I refer to this diverse assemblage of pericopes as the Traditions of David's Rise and Reign (TDRR). Although I go through the David complex there in some detail, even it should be considered nothing more than a prolegomenon—as the numerous monographs dedicated to the source and redaction criticism of 1–2 Samuel attest, demarcating the various sources and layers of the biblical David material is a major enterprise.

5.2.1 *Passages of Potentially Authentic Davidic Material*²⁶

I	1 Sam 16:14–23	David Arrives in Saul's Court
II	1 Sam 18:6–9*, 12–16*	Saul's Jealousy of David
III	1 Sam 18:20–27*	David Marries Michal

23. A parallel account appears in 1 Chr 10–29, but since this is a later text whose historical value derives primarily from its use of the Samuel-Kings account, it does not factor heavily into this study.

24. This applies particularly to interpolations to the David complex from the Prophetic Record and the Deuteronomistic redactor. For more on this, see the analysis in §5.2.2.

25. As I point out in my discussion below of the *Sitz im Leben* of the biblical David story, I do think at least some of the passages are of Davidic date. With this in mind, I suggest that the burden of proof lies on establishing a text's lateness rather than its earliness.

26. Since I do not consider this material to derive from a self-contained composition, as is discussed in this chapter, I prefer to eschew the term "Outline" here.

IV	1 Sam 18:28–29a; 19:1–10	Jonathan Intercedes for David; Saul Attempts to Kill David
V	1 Sam 19:11–17	Michal Assists David's Flight
VI	1 Sam 20:1b–10, 18–22, 24–39; 21:1[20:42b]	Jonathan Warns David Again
VII	1 Sam 21:2[1]–10[1–9]; 22:6–23	The Incident at the Nob Sanctuary
VIII	1 Sam 21:11–16[10–15]	David Feigns Madness before Achish
IX	1 Sam 22:1–2	David's Outlaw Band
X	1 Sam 23:1–5, 6–13	David Liberates Keilah, Then Flees from Saul
XI	1 Sam 23:14–15, 19–24:1[23:29]	Another Close Encounter
XII	1 Sam 24:2–20[1–19], 23b[22b]	David Spares Saul (I)
XIII	1 Sam 25:1b–27, 32–44	Nabal's Folly; David and Abigail
XIV	1 Sam 26:1–25	David Spares Saul (II)
XV	1 Sam 27:1–12	David's Life among the Philistines
XVI	1 Sam 28:1–2; 29:1–11	David Discharged from the Philistine Muster
XVII	1 Sam 30:1–31	David Recovers the Families and Goods
XVIII	1 Sam 31:1–13	The Death of Saul
XIX	2 Sam 1:1–16	The Amalekite's Report of the Death of Saul
XX	2 Sam 1:17–27	Lamentation over the Deaths of Saul and Jonathan
XXI	2 Sam 2:1–9, 10b	David Anointed King over Judah; Ish-Baal Installed over Israel
XXII	2 Sam 2:12–17	Death at Gibeon
XXIII	2 Sam 2:18–32	Abner and Joab
XXIV	2 Sam 3:1, 6–8, 11–18a, 19–39	David and Abner
XXV	2 Sam 4:1–12	The Assassination of Ish-Baal
XXVI	2 Sam 5:1–3	David Anointed King over Israel
XXVII	2 Sam 5:6–10	David Conquers Jerusalem
XXVIII	2 Sam 5:17–21, 22–25	David Pushes Back the Philistines
XXIX	2 Sam 6:1–13, 17–19	The Transfer of the Ark to Jerusalem
XXX	2 Sam 6:14–16*, 20–23	Michal Despises David
XXXI	2 Sam 8:1–14	The Wars of David
XXXII	2 Sam 9:1–13	Merib-Baal
XXXIII	2 Sam 10:1–11:1; 12:26–31	The Ammonite-Aramean War
XXXIV	2 Sam 13:1–22	The Rape of Tamar
XXXV	2 Sam 13:23–39	The Murder of Amnon
XXXVI	2 Sam 14:1–33	Absalom Is Restored
XXXVII	2 Sam 15:1–12	Absalom Sows the Seeds of Revolt
XXXVIII	2 Sam 15:13–16:14; 17:24–29	Flight to Transjordan

XXXIX	2 Sam 16:15–17:23*	Dueling Counselors
XL	2 Sam 18:1–8	Battle in the Forest
XLI	2 Sam 18:9–19:9a[8a]	The Death of Absalom
XLII	2 Sam 19:9b[8b]–20:3	Return to Jerusalem
XLIII	2 Sam 20:4–13	The Murder of Amasa
XLIV	2 Sam 20:14–22	The Second Rebellion Ends
XLV	2 Sam 21:1–6, 8–14	The Execution of the Saulides
XLVI	2 Sam 21:15–22	Defeat of the Philistine Heroes
XLVII	2 Sam 23:8–39*	David's Mighty Men

I. The tragedy of King Saul continues when an “evil spirit from Yahweh” (רוח־רעה מאת יהוה, 16:14) troubles him. In response, his servants seek out a minstrel to play the lyre for him and alleviate his suffering. They find David, the son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, whom Saul’s servant introduces in glowing terms. The description ends in the servant’s acknowledgment that “Yahweh is with him” (ויהוה עמו, 16:18), which serves as a leitmotif in much of TDRR (see McCarter 1980b, 499). Thus David providentially arrives in the court of Saul, and his ascent to the throne of Judah and Israel begins.

II. After demonstrating his military prowess in battle with the Philistines, David becomes a hero among the Israelites and Judahites, provoking Saul’s jealousy. Nevertheless, Saul promotes David in the army.

III. Saul’s daughter, Michal, loves David, and Saul attempts to exploit this by requesting a dangerously obtained brideprice from David—one hundred Philistine foreskins. Undeterred, David rises to the challenge and secures the requested bride price,²⁷ and receives Michal as his wife.

IV. Saul’s son Jonathan “delighted in David greatly” (חפץ בדיד מאד, 19:1). When Saul makes known his intention to kill David, therefore, Jonathan alerts David to the danger, then pleads David’s innocence to his father. Saul is persuaded and David returns to his court. After a brief notice of further conflict with the Philistines (19:8), Saul, overcome with another “evil spirit of Yahweh” (רוח יהוה רעה, 19:9), attempts to kill David by hurling a spear at him. David evades him and flees.

V. Still enamored with David, Michal encourages David to flee lest Saul attempt to murder him again. David fortuitously agrees, for after his departure Saul’s henchmen arrive to dispose of him. Michal deceives them by stating that David is sick. When her deception is revealed, Saul confronts her and Michal adds another layer of mendacity by stating that David threatened to kill her if she prevented his escape.

27. According to MT, David actually doubles the requested brideprice, obtaining two hundred Philistine foreskins (18:27). The OG preserves one hundred here, however, and this is corroborated by 2 Sam 3:14. Thus the MT reading appears to be secondary, though one can only guess whether this was a deliberate change or an accidental corruption.

VI. With his life again in jeopardy, David turns to Jonathan for help. Jonathan agrees to sound out his father and the two construct an elaborate scheme for him to inform David secretly of Saul's objective. When Jonathan discovers that Saul still harbors murderous intent, he warns David, who flees.

VII. In the first part of this story (21:2–10[1–9]), David arrives at Nob where he disingenuously tells the priest Ahimelech that he is on a royal errand and needs provisions. Unfortunately, Doeg the Edomite witnesses the exchange. When the story resumes (22:6–23) after briefly following David elsewhere, Saul learns of David's visit to Nob and goes there to interrogate Ahimelech about conspiring against him. Unconvinced by Ahimelech's honest response that he unwittingly assisted David, Saul orders a mass sacerdoticide which his troops are unwilling to perform. The nefarious Doeg the Edomite more than obliges, however, slaughtering not just the priests, but all humans and livestock (22:19). Only one of Ahimelech's sons survives, a priest named Abiathar, who escapes and joins David's cohort.

VIII. David flees to King Achish of Gath, apparently looking for asylum from Saul. Achish's servants are wary of this renowned killer of Philistines, however, and caution Achish. Realizing his precarious position, David "changed his behavior in their sight" (וַיִּשְׁנוּ אֶת־טַעְמוֹ בְּעֵינֵיהֶם, 21:14[13]) and pretended to be insane. Achish questions David's presence and the episode abruptly concludes.

IX. David's continued flight leads him to Adullam, a refuge in Judah. Here a posse of "about four hundred" (בֶּאֱרֶבֶעַ מֵאוֹת אִישׁ, 22:2) disgruntled fugitives gathers to him.

X. David is informed that the Philistines have assaulted Keilah, a city northwest of Hebron.²⁸ He inquires of Yahweh whether he should fight the Philistines and deliver the city, and when he receives an affirmative reply he does so. Meanwhile, Saul discovers his whereabouts and travels to Keilah to seize David. After consulting Yahweh again, this time through the priestly intervention of Abiathar, David learns that the inhabitants of Keilah intend to hand him over to Saul, so he again absconds.

XI. David's renewed flight brings him to the Wilderness of Ziph; Saul again learns of his location and seeks him out. The chase brings both pursuer and pursued to a mountain in the Wilderness of Ma'on, where tidings come of a Philistine invasion just as Saul closes in on David. Saul abandons the chase to attend to the matter, and David escapes.

XII. David continues to En Gedi; Saul again learns of his location and pursues him. At one point Saul enters a cave to relieve himself, unaware that his quarry

28. Keilah occupied the periphery between Judah and Philistia, as is clear from the narrative and the location of the site (see the map on McCarter 1980a, 353–54). Thus I cannot accept McCarter's emendation of מַעְרֻכּוֹת "ranks" to יִרְכְּתֵי "deep recesses" in 23:4 (1980a, 369), though I agree with his conclusion that Keilah appears to be an independent city, "which because of its location was important to both Philistine and Israelite [*sic?* Judahite seems more reasonable] interests" (1980a, 371).

lurks in the back of the very cave. David's men consider this the providence of Yahweh and encourage him to "do to [Saul] whatever seems good to you" (ועשיתה לו כאשר יטב בעיניך, 24:5[4]). David surreptitiously cuts off a corner of Saul's robe but does no bodily harm to the king since, despite their rivalry, he remains the anointed of Yahweh. Saul, apparently absorbed in his activity and oblivious to the other in-cave goings-on, leaves, but David follows and delivers an impassioned speech. He protests Saul's continued pursuit, alerting Saul to his rent garment that serves as indisputable proof that David refuses to lay a hand on him. Saul acknowledges David's righteousness and returns home.

XIII. Now in Ma'on, David sends some members of his posse to the wealthy Nabal and requests provisions.²⁹ When Nabal refuses, David becomes infuriated and prepares to attack Nabal's estate. Nabal's wife, Abigail, intercepts him en route and offers him a gift to assuage his rage. David accepts and praises her for preventing him from following through on his murderous inclination. Abigail returns to Nabal, who apparently suffers a heart attack: "his heart died within him and he became like a stone" (וימת לבו בקרבו והוא היה לאבן, 25:37). He dies ten days later. David praises Yahweh for repaying Nabal for his wickedness, and he takes Abigail as his wife. In a brief appendix, the narrator mentions that David married Ahinoam the Jezreelitess as well, but his wife Michal, Saul's daughter, was given to another (25:43–44).

XIV. Saul again learns of David's location, now in the Wilderness of Ziph, and pursues him. At night, David and Abishai penetrate Saul's camp and approach the dormant king and his equally incognizant commander, Abner. Aided by a "deep sleep of Yahweh" (תרדמת יהוה, 26:12), David and Abishai steal Saul's spear and water jug and abscond without disturbance. At a safe remove, David shouts to rouse the sleeping army. He first berates Abner for failing to protect his sovereign, then entreats Saul to stop hunting him. Saul repents and agrees to cease following David in the future. David then leaves Saul's spear for one of his attendants to retrieve, and the two go their separate ways.

XV. Resigned to the fact that Saul will eventually succeed in murdering him if he remains in Judah, David journeys to the land of the Philistines, posse and family in tow. He finds favor with King Achish of Gath, who grants him the city Ziklag as a residence. From Ziklag David leads his men on raids to various locations, always exterminating all residents so that word of his actions will not get back to Achish. David deceives Achish by claiming that he has raided, among

29. I use the term "requests" loosely. I interpret the plain sense of this text as depicting David's purpose here as extortion, and the image of David is not flattering. This conflicts with the latter part of the passage, which is apologetic insofar as it protests David's innocence in Nabal's death. See my remarks in §5.3. Van Seters's comments on this passage (2009, 186–90), especially its connection to the Amnon-Tamar-Absalom cycle in 2 Sam 13–14, merit further discussion.

other peoples, the Judahites, and Achish ignorantly believes that he has alienated himself from the people of Israel.

XVI. As war between Israelites and Philistines approaches, Achish requests David and his men to accompany him in battle. David agrees, but the other Philistine leaders remain mistrustful and demand that David and his men leave the battle. Achish reluctantly acquiesces, assuring David of his continued faith in him but declaring that he must leave in view of the other leaders' wishes. David departs.

XVII. David and his men return from their truncated foray to find Ziklag in ashes and their families missing. With mutiny brewing, David inquires of Yahweh whether to pursue the raiders and receives an affirmative answer. Some of his men tire on the journey, but the others proceed and find a convalescent Egyptian who was left to die by his master, conveniently a member of the troop that raided Ziklag. He leads David's men to the celebratory troop; David catches them by surprise, defeats them, and recovers everything that was taken from Ziklag, including all of their untouched families. They all return to Ziklag, reuniting with those too tired to continue with them, and David generously shares the spoil with them to the chagrin of those who marched throughout. David then distributes some of the spoil among various elders of Judah.

XVIII. The long-awaited battle between Israelites and Philistines commences, and it quickly turns into a rout in the Philistines' favor. The Philistines kill three of Saul's sons, and after being wounded himself, Saul commits suicide. When the Philistines find his corpse, they decapitate it and affix it to the wall of Beth Shean. The residents of Jabesh-Gilead steal up to the wall and remove the bodies of Saul and his sons, then burn them and fast for seven days.

XIX. An Amalekite³⁰ arrives at David's camp in Ziklag, bringing tidings of the deaths of Saul and Jonathan. The Amalekite claims that he came upon Saul, who being in great pain and already mortally wounded, begged him to kill him. The Amalekite complied, then collected Saul's regalia and brought them to David. Upon hearing this, David and his men grieve. David then orders the execution of the Amalekite for harming the anointed of Yahweh.

XX. David composes a lamentation over Saul and Jonathan.

XXI. David inquires of Yahweh whether he should go to one of the cities of Judah and is instructed to go to Hebron. He does so, and "the men of Judah" (אנשי יהודה, 2:4) come and anoint him king. David also learns of the Jabesh-Gileadites' kindness toward the body of Saul (1 Sam 31:11–13) and he blesses them for it.

30. The unfortunate timing of the Amalekite's arrival in this story often goes unnoticed. David and his men had just returned from a slaughter of Amalekites who had stolen their goods and kidnapped their families. Thus, although David's ostensible reason for murdering the messenger is his disregard for the sanctity of Saul's person, the fact that David orders the execution immediately after the man reveals himself as an Amalekite may not be coincidence.

Meanwhile, Saul's commander Abner takes Saul's son, Ish-Baal, crosses the Jordan River to Mahanaim, and installs him as king over all Israel.

XXII. Abner and Joab, David's servant, meet at Gibeon and agree to "let the young men arise and play" (יָקוּמוּ נָא הַנְּעָרִים וַיִּשְׁחָקוּ, 2:14) before them. Twenty-four men total compete, twelve followers of Ish-Baal and twelve of David. They grapple with one another and everyone is killed.

XXIII. Asahel, Joab's brother, chases Abner. Abner entreats him to stop, but when Asahel refuses, Abner halts and murders him. Joab continues the chase, but eventually Abner persuades him to turn around and prevent more bloodshed.

XXIV. War breaks out between the house of Saul and the house of David. Abner strengthens his position within the former and eventually has a rift with his sovereign, Ish-Baal, over one of Saul's concubines. Abner sends envoys to David, offering to defect to him, to which David agrees in exchange for the return of his former wife, Michal, daughter of Saul. Abner arranges for this and for the elders of Israel to turn to David. Abner and David rendezvous in Hebron and make a pact. This infuriates Joab, who follows Abner and murders him to avenge his brother Asahel. When David learns of the deed, he proclaims his innocence, curses Joab, and mourns Abner. He successfully absolves himself from the deed, for "all the people, and all Israel, knew that day that David was not involved in the killing of Abner, son of Ner" (3:37).

XXV. Unsettled by the death of Abner, two of Ish-Baal's captains, Baanah and Rechab, take matters into their own hands and assassinate their sovereign. They bring Ish-Baal's head to David at Hebron expecting a reward, but instead David has them executed for perpetrating further bloodshed upon the house of Saul. David then buries the head of Ish-Baal with Abner.

XXVI. Representatives of Israel come to David at Hebron and anoint him as their king. This inaugurates the era of the united monarchy.

XXVII. David conquers Jerusalem of the Jebusites and dubs it the City of David. David's greatness increases.

XXVIII. On two occasions, the Philistines assemble at the Valley of Rephaim with hostile intent. Each time, David inquires of Yahweh what he should do, follows instructions, and defeats the Philistines.

XXIX. David determines to bring the ark of Yahweh to Jerusalem and assembles a large host to accompany it. En route, an ox leading the ark stumbles and Uzzah reaches out and steadies it. Uzzah immediately drops dead, leading David to question the sagacity of bringing such a treacherous object into his capital. He leaves it at the household of Obed-Edom the Gittite for three months, during which time the household prospers. David thus decides to try leading the ark into Jerusalem again, now with accompanying sacrifices every six steps along the way. This time the ark reaches the tabernacle without incident.

XXX. Michal witnesses David dancing before Yahweh as the ark enters Jerusalem, and she sarcastically rebukes him for such indignity. David replies that

he will humiliate himself further still and the narrator reports that Michal had no children until her death.

XXXI. The narrator records David's victories over the Philistines, Moabites, Arameans, and Edomites *seriatim*.

XXXII. David inquires whether there is a scion of Saul to whom he can show kindness, and is directed to Ziba, a servant of Saul's household. Ziba informs him that Jonathan has a surviving son, Merib-Baal, who is lame. David brings Merib-Baal into his household where he "ate continually at the king's table" (על־שלחן המלך תמיד הוא אכל, 9:13), and he entrusts Ziba with the ongoing stewardship of Saul's estate, which is now the property of Merib-Baal.

XXXIII. David's Ammonite ally Nahash dies, and Nahash's son Hanun suspects David now has designs on Ammon. He therefore makes an alliance with the Arameans and prepares for war. David sends Joab with the army, and with his brother Abishai's help Joab defeats the Ammonite-Aramean coalition. The Arameans, led by Hadadezer, respond by mustering a vast army "from beyond the river" (מעבר הנהר, 10:16);³¹ David marches to meet them at Helam across the Jordan and prevails. Later David sends Joab with the army to besiege Rabbah of Ammon. Joab does so, setting up an imminent victory; then he summons David, who comes and leads the army in the final leg of the campaign.

XXXIV. David's son Amnon loves his half-sister Tamar. One day he feigns illness so that she will attend to him and they can be alone. He rapes her, at which point his love turns to hatred and he banishes her from his presence despite her pleas. When Tamar mourns the loss of her virginity, her father, David, learns of the affair and becomes angry, but he does not take action.

XXXV. Tamar's full brother Absalom, aware of the crime of Amnon, arranges a feast in Baal Hazor to which he invites all of his brothers and David his father. Absalom gets Amnon drunk, then has his servants murder him, at which point his brothers all flee home to Jerusalem. Absalom flees to Geshur, where he

31. "The river" here most likely refers to the Euphrates, which is often referred to in the Hebrew Bible without the specification of the proper name "Euphrates" (פרת). The region around the bend in the Euphrates was considered the home of the Arameans as early as the reign of Tiglath-pileser I (1114–1076 BCE) and presents no prohibitive historical difficulty (see McCarter 1984, 272–73). Halpern leaves the identity of "the river" open (2001, 164–65)—he does not connect this to his idea of the author deliberately misleading the reader through ambiguity, but it fits his "Tiglath-pileser principle." Such deliberate duplicity seems to me out of character in a royal inscription. Na'aman treats "beyond the river" as the proper name "Eber nāri," an official designation of the lands west of the Euphrates (thus "beyond" becomes counterintuitive, since "Beyond the River" refers to the area on the same side of the river as the audience would have been; see Na'aman 2002, 208). Such an interpretation would work for a text written in the Persian period, but even if one dates the text to the beginning of the eighth century as Na'aman does (2002, 214), it seems anachronistic.

remains for three years. David, meanwhile, is comforted over Amnon's death and desires to reconcile with Absalom.

XXXVI. Joab recognizes David's desire to reconcile with Absalom and enlists the help of a "wise woman" (אִשָּׁה חַכְמָה, 14:2) of Tekoa. The woman convinces David to repatriate Absalom through an elaborate ruse and Joab retrieves the fugitive son from Geshur. After two years without any audience with David, Absalom forces the issue, and father and son reunite.

XXXVII. Absalom provides himself a retinue and stations himself by the gate, bemoaning the lack of justice in the land, and through his charm "Absalom stole the heart of the people of Israel" (וַיִּגְנוּ אֲבִשְׁלוֹם אֶת־לֵב אֲנָשֵׁי יִשְׂרָאֵל, 15:6). Sometime later,³² Absalom obtains leave from David to go to Hebron, whereupon he instigates a rebellion and has his supporters declare him king.

XXXVIII. David learns that the people of Israel support Absalom and he immediately flees Jerusalem with his household (except ten concubines), his royal bodyguard of Cherethites and Pelethites, and a contingent of Gittite warriors. During the egress, the narrator mentions several stopping points and various parties whom David encounters: David first meets Ittai the Gittite, who professes his loyalty and joins David's entourage; they then all cross the Wadi Kidron. David next encounters the priests Zadok and Abiathar, whom he instructs to return to the city with the ark. They dutifully comply. David then climbs the Ascent of Olives,³³ on the summit of which he meets Hushai the Archite, who is in mourning, apparently for the plight that has befallen his sovereign. David requests that Hushai return to Jerusalem and serve as a double agent, tasked with confounding the advice of Absalom's wise counselor Ahithophel and informing David of Absalom's plans. Hushai agrees. A little past the summit, David encounters Ziba, the steward of the house of Saul, who tells him that Merib-Baal has remained in Jerusalem in the hope of being restored to the kingship of Israel. David then treks to Bahurim and sees Shimei, "a man of the family of the house of Saul" (... אִישׁ מִמִּשְׁפַּחַת בֵּית־שָׁאוּל, 16:5), who curses him as a "bloodstained man" (אִישׁ דָּמִים, lit. "man of blood," 16:7; also אִישׁ דָּמִים, 16:8) responsible for the downfall of the house of Saul. Abishai requests permission to kill Shimei, but David stops him because "Yahweh has told him" (אָמַר־לִי יְהוָה, 16:11) to curse. David's party even-

32. MT reads "And it happened after forty years" (וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה, 15:7), which must be a corruption—this makes no chronological sense since David would have been exceedingly old by this time. Even more objectionable is the fact that the text states that David's entire reign was forty years (2 Sam 5:4), making this an impossibility in the horizon of the *textus receptus*. The most likely emendation is simply "four years," with the Lucianic manuscripts of LXX and Josephus. For more on the issue, see McCarter 1984, 355.

33. The "Ascent of Olives" (מַעֲלֵה הַזֵּיתִים, 15:30) is otherwise unknown and may be an older appellation for the Mount of Olives (הַר הַזֵּיתִים). It seems to represent, if not the Mount of Olives itself, perhaps one of the three hills that constitute the entire Mount. For the textual variants and further comment, see McCarter 1984, 366, 371.

tually reaches a stopping point³⁴ and they refresh themselves. After the itinerary is interrupted by the contemporaneous events in Jerusalem (episode XXXIX), the narrative resumes with David's journey to Mahanaim. He is pursued by Absalom and "all the men of Israel" (17:24), who camp in Gilead with Amasa as the new military commander. David and those with him are welcomed and provisioned by Shobi the Ammonite and Barzillai the Gileadite.

XXXIX. Absalom and his supporters arrive at Jerusalem, where he meets Hushai the Archite. He chastises Hushai for abandoning his "friend" David; Hushai responds ambiguously but in such a way that Absalom assumes that he now supports him. Absalom then turns to his counselor Ahithophel, who advises him to take David's concubines whom he left in the city; Absalom does so. Ahithophel then requests permission to summon a force of twelve thousand men to pursue David immediately, but Hushai suggests that Absalom first muster "all Israel" (17:11) due to David's renowned military prowess. Absalom follows the advice of Hushai, because as the narrator tells us, "Yahweh had commanded to overturn the good counsel of Ahithophel, so that Yahweh might bring disaster on Absalom" (17:14). Despite this, Hushai sends his agents to encourage David and his men to cross the Jordan quickly, and they do so. Ahithophel, meanwhile, learns that his advice was not followed and hangs himself.

XL. In the forest of Ephraim³⁵ the long-awaited war between David's and Absalom's men finally breaks out. Led by Joab, Abishai, and Ittai, David's side routs Absalom's.

XLI. While riding his mule through the forest, Absalom gets his head caught in the branches of a terebinth. His mule shuffles on, leaving him suspended "between the sky and the earth" (בין השמים ובין הארץ, 18:9). When Joab learns of this, he flouts David's express orders given in the previous episode to be gentle with Absalom (2 Sam 18:5) and spears him, and he and his armor-bearers kill him. After they cast Absalom into a pit, two men, a Cushite and Ahimaaz, son of Zadok, run to tell David what transpired in the battle. Ahimaaz arrives first and translates the news of victory, and while he is still reporting the Cushite arrives and informs the king of Absalom's demise. David weeps bitterly and demoralizes the people, causing Joab to excoriate him for honoring the life of his rebellious son over the

34. MT and most witnesses lack the location at which they arrived. The *textus receptus* appears corrupt, as the Hebrew literally reads, "And the king and all the people who were with him came weary" (וַיָּבֹא הַמֶּלֶךְ וְכָל־הָעָם אֲשֶׁר־אִתּוֹ עֵיפִים, 16:14).

35. This location has long vexed scholars. The previous episodes have painstakingly followed both groups eastward from Jerusalem across the Jordan, yet suddenly the battle erupts in an area of Ephraim, known only as a Cisjordanian region. The simplest solution is to assume an otherwise unknown "forest of Ephraim" in Transjordan (see McCarter 1984, 405), though some recently have translated the battle to a region just north of Jerusalem (for a summary of the discussion see Hutton 2009, 204–7, though Hutton does not adopt this solution himself).

lives of his faithful servants. David arises and sits in the gate, where he is seen by all the people.

XLII. Absalom's erstwhile followers urge the representatives³⁶ of Israel to escort David back to Jerusalem to help restore their relationship with the deposed king, and in response David sends a message to Zadok and Abiathar encouraging them to have the elders of Judah restore him. He also promises Absalom's commander Amasa control of his army in place of Joab. David wins over the vacillating Judahites, who come to Gilgal and escort him on his journey back to Jerusalem. As he crosses the Jordan, several people come to meet him and any remaining concerns about loyalty are resolved. Shimei arrives first and begs for and receives David's indulgence for his earlier hostile words. Merib-Baal arrives next, appearing as a mourner, and apologizes for his earlier absence by saying that his servant Ziba deceived and slandered him; he was loyal to David all along. David divides the land earlier granted to Ziba between the two, but Merib-Baal renounces it all in honor of the king's return. Barzillai appears next and turns down David's offer to live with him in Jerusalem on account of his advanced age, sending his servant Chimham in his stead. After this a schism develops between the men of Israel and the men of Judah, which results in the men of Israel abandoning David to follow a certain Benjaminite named Sheba. A final notice mentions David returning to his concubines whom Absalom had taken and secluding them so that they "lived in widowhood" (אַלְמָנוֹת חַיּוֹת, 20:3).

XLIII. With the rebellion of Sheba threatening the kingdom, David orders his new commander Amasa (see 2 Sam 19:14[13]) to muster the Judahites. But when he fails to complete the task within the three days appointed to him by David, David again turns to the sons of Zeruiah for help. Joab and Amasa meet on the road and the former purports to be friendly, but he stabs and kills Amasa during their greeting.

XLIV. Joab pursues the rebel leader Sheba to Abel of Beth Maacah and besieges the town. Under duress, a "wise woman" (אִשָּׁה חַכְמָה, 20:16) cuts a deal to deliver Sheba's head, body not included, to Joab in exchange for him sparing the town. When the residents of Abel follow through, the second rebellion ends.

XLV. The kingdom suffers from a famine for three years. David discovers the source to be Yahweh's lingering anger caused by Saul's prior slaughter of the Gibeonites. To rectify the situation, David hands over seven descendants of Saul

36. MT presents the dispute as occurring between "all the people" (כָּל־הָעָם) and "all the tribes of Israel" (כָּל־שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, *kol šibtê yiśrā'el*, 19:10[9]). Since the "tribes" of Israel do not seem like an appropriate disputant with the "people"—that is, Absalom's former supporters, who would have been the people of Israel—McCarter revocalizes *šibtê* to *šōbētê* "staff-bearers," representing a group comparable to the elders (1984, 419–20). The latter term is less common, but this explains why the Masoretes might have vocalized according to the common idiom "tribes of Israel" in the first place. Overall, this solution makes good sense of the text without resorting to emendation and should be accepted; see also 2 Sam 5:1.

to the Gibeonites, who execute them. David then takes their bones, along with the bones of Saul and Jonathan, and buries them, after which "God accepted the plea of the land" (ויעתר אלהים לארץ, 21:14).

XLVI. The narrator reflects upon the slaying of four great Philistine warriors by David's men.

XLVII. The narrator reflects upon various exploits of the greatest of David's warriors and includes a list of mighty men.

5.2.2 *Source Criticism of the Traditions of David's Rise and Reign*

The biblical text is a tapestry of diverse witnesses to David, and these witnesses stem from a variety of perspectives and periods. Interpretation of the historical David therefore relies on source criticism; one must begin by determining which sources provide the most reliable glimpses of the historical David, rather than simply the David of tradition.³⁷ I provided the results of my source-critical work in the above delineation of the Traditions of David's Rise and Reign (§5.2.1), but this work requires some justification. My primary purpose is to distinguish between inauthentic and potentially authentic³⁸ traditions within the biblical narrative of David. By excluding the former and including the latter we come one step closer to bridging the gap between monarch and apology caused by the lack of a direct witness to any text of David. I accomplish this by exploring some previous source-critical analyses of the David narrative, then examining the text myself.

The biblical story of David appears in the complex known by scholars as the Deuteronomistic History, a block of text extending from Deuteronomy through 2 Kings which, according to the theory that has prevailed through most of the last several decades, was compiled near the end of the monarchic period, in the late seventh century BCE.³⁹ But while most scholars assert that the text began to take

37. The clearest and most convincing works on the historical David all involve careful discussions of the sources used to reconstruct his life; see for example McCarter 1980b, 489–93; Halpern discusses these issues throughout his monograph (2001). On the other hand, Joel Baden's recent book on the historical David suffered from the lack of such a discussion, as I noted in my review (Knapp 2014b). In his article on the subject, David Bosworth (2006) too neglects to address the sources, with unfortunate consequences. Bosworth fails to convince because he repeatedly differentiates David from other ancient Near Eastern rulers by appealing to the negative portrayal of David in sources acknowledged by the majority of scholars to be late and ahistorical.

38. For my definition of this word, see my remarks at the outset of this chapter, esp. n. 2.

39. I refer to Cross's theory of a Josianic Deuteronomist followed by a later exilic redactor (Cross 1973, 274–89). Though questions about the nature of the Deuteronomistic History have become more frequent in the past few decades, this basic thesis remains the view of the majority of scholars, at least in North America. For an excellent history of scholarship about the theory of the Deuteronomistic History, see Römer 2007, 13–43.

a shape that we would recognize during that period, it is generally accepted that the Deuteronomist was primarily a compiler and redactor of older sources, and only secondarily an author. In the story of David especially, the Deuteronomist seems to have incorporated multiple previously existing documents with minimal editing.⁴⁰ But what were these documents?

For the first part of the twentieth century, most scholars followed the conclusions of Leonhard Rost and his successors on this subject with little argument.⁴¹ In his influential 1926 study, *Die Überlieferung von der Thronnachfolge Davids*,⁴² Rost outlined two sources that were incorporated into the greater biblical historical narrative with little revision—the Ark Narrative, documenting a series of events involving the ark of the covenant and its eventual installation in Jerusalem, which he outlined as 1 Sam 4:1b–7:1*; 2 Sam 6:1–20a*,⁴³ and the Succession Narrative, explaining how David’s elder sons disqualified themselves from the kingship and thus the younger Solomon succeeded his father, which he outlined as 2 Sam 9–20*; 1 Kgs 1–2*.⁴⁴ A third source covering the ascension of David from an unknown shepherd to king of Judah and Israel, dubbed the History of David’s Rise, was also hypothesized. Though mentioned in scholarship as early as the nineteenth century, this source received its first modern treatment in the work of Jakob Grønbaek, who considered it to encompass 1 Sam 15–2 Sam 5 (Grønbaek 1971, 16–17).⁴⁵

40. McCarter writes: “The most striking aspect of the Deuteronomistic redaction of Samuel, whether Josianic or Exilic, is its sparseness” (1980a, 15; see Halpern 1981, 152). Van Seters (2009) provides a significantly different perspective, arguing that one of the two main documents about David’s rise was a composition of the Deuteronomist. As I will discuss more below, however, I think his understanding of the nature of the Davidic material is flawed.

41. A mention of Rost as the father of the Succession Narrative hypothesis seems obligatory for any work on this unit of text today. It should be noted, however, that Rost’s innovation lay primarily in his description of the character of this passage, not in the assertion that it represents a unified, independent source. Indeed, Wellhausen himself anticipated both the History of David’s Rise and the Succession Narrative (which he delimited as 1 Sam 14:52–2 Sam 8:18, and 2 Sam 9–1 Kgs 2 excluding 2 Sam 21–24, respectively; Wellhausen 2001, 259) in the *Prolegomena*. See Van Seters 2009, 4–5.

42. My citations follow the English translation by Rutter and Gunn (= Rost 1982).

43. I use the asterisks here for simplicity; Rost does not use them. More precisely, Rost includes the following in the Ark Narrative: 1 Sam 4:1b–18a, 19–21; 5:1–11ba, 12; 6:1–3ba, 4, 10–14, 16; 6:19–7:1; 2 Sam 6:1–15, 17–20a (1982, 33).

44. Rost also includes a few verses from 2 Sam 6–7 in the Succession Narrative, though few scholars have followed him in this. Specifically, he delimits the boundaries of the Succession Narrative as follows: 2 Sam 6:16, 20b–23; 7:11b, 16; 9:1–10:5, (6–11:1), 2–12:7a; 12:13–25 (26–31); 13:1–14:24, 28–18:17, 19–20:22; 1 Kgs 1–2:1, 5–10, 12–27a, 28–46 (1982, 87).

45. Rost often gets credit for delimiting the History of David’s Rise as well as the other two sources, but he only mentioned in passing a “narrative strand relating David’s rise to power [that] finishes at II Sam 5.10” (Rost 1982, 8). As mentioned above (n. 41), this source

The Ark Narrative takes place mostly, if not entirely, prior to David, and therefore does not merit a thorough investigation here. The other two sources, the History of David's Rise and the Succession Narrative, contribute the majority of our material on David, and therefore deserve several remarks. Scholarship of these two units developed in distinct directions, so although some overlap will occur, it will be better to examine them separately.

The History of David's Rise (HDR). Although the longest posited source to be included in Samuel, HDR remained in the shadows until the late 1950s. In the most recent half century, however, this unit has been the focus of countless studies. A full survey of the scholarly positions regarding this unit would be prohibitively long, so it will suffice here to provide four representative scholarly models of interpretation. These four models are not meant to demonstrate the entire spectrum of thought regarding HDR. Instead, the first three (those of McCarter, Halpern, and Hutton) all work from a similar basic understanding of the historiographical character of the biblical text as that underlying this study, so they serve to illuminate some of the differences within this view. The final model (that of Van Seters) reaches vastly different conclusions about the character of the narrative; I discuss his work in order to have an interlocutor from across the aisle, so to speak.⁴⁶

The first method is that of Kyle McCarter, whose commentaries on 1–2 Samuel (1980a; 1984) and complementary article “The Apology of David” (1980b) served as the springboard for many more recent treatments of David. Building on and modifying the work of Weiser, Mettinger, and Grønbaek especially, Mc-

was suggested as early as Wellhausen, but it did not receive much attention until the mid-twentieth century. One could quibble with my assertion that Grønbaek presented the first “modern” treatment of the History of David's Rise, since this excludes the influential studies of Nübel (1959) and Weiser (1966). But both of these earlier authors included material now recognized as Deuteronomistic in their analyses—Nübel delimited the History as 1 Sam 16–2 Sam 9*, with 2 Sam 10–12 being a related piece of the text block (1959, 16–17, 22–123) and Weiser delimited the History as 1 Sam 16–2 Sam 7 (1966, 342–54)—and this factored heavily into their conclusions. Thus Grønbaek's study took a major step forward by excluding 2 Sam 7. The History of David's Rise did not appear frequently in North American scholarship until the studies of Samuel by McCarter (1980a, 1980b, 1984).

46. An important new study that deserves a place in this conversation but unfortunately appeared too late for me to fully integrate is Jacob Wright's *David, King of Israel, and Caleb in Biblical Memory* (Cambridge University Press, 2014). Wright provides insightful analysis of several Davidic stories, but from them develops a conclusion that I find difficult to sustain. On the one hand, he is doubtless correct about his thesis of war commemoration—various groups did use this narrative to negotiate belonging. But I do not at all see how it follows from this that the underlying narrative is entirely unhistorical. On the contrary, to me the use of these stories by diverse parties all but demands their basic historicity. Wright's individual analyses seem to me strong evidence for viewing the text as a palimpsest, a la Hutton 2009. Also, Wright's explanation of the (non)apologetic character of the narratives is weak.

Carter asserts that HDR is “an originally independent and more or less unified composition” underlying the biblical text of 1 Sam 16:14–2 Sam 5:10 (1980b, 490). This composition was included in the Deuteronomistic History in “more or less unrevised form” (1980b, 492); therefore, after one removes later accretions it “can be subjected to independent analysis” (1980b, 493).⁴⁷ Although not as obviously homogeneous as the Ark Narrative or Succession Narrative, HDR demonstrates an “overarching unity of theme and purpose” (1980b, 490). The theme and purpose are jointly political—showing David’s ascent to the throne of Judah and Israel to have been lawful in spite of suspicious circumstances—and theological—establishing his legitimacy through the divine election of Yahweh (1980a, 28). Because concerns about David’s conduct and legitimacy best suit the context of David’s own reign and pertain to actual episodes of David’s life, McCarter treats HDR as a contemporary Davidic, historiographical composition. Overall, his model of HDR is a single, unified source comprising the elements shown in table 2.

Certain other scholars, however, object to McCarter’s idea of HDR as the product of one author on the basis of several doublets in the story.⁴⁸ Baruch Halpern, for example, asserts that “the consistent presence of doublets ... indicates the participation of a second source in any given narrative.... A consistent, variant narrative is the only sure criterion for establishing the existence of more than one original source” (1981, 151–52). Whereas McCarter explains the doublets away on

47. The accretions to the History of David’s Rise are, in McCarter’s view, of three types: additions made when the document was included in the Prophetic Record, Deuteronomistic supplements, and other, less easily identifiable additions. See table 2.

The “Prophetic Record” (= “Prophetic History” in McCarter’s terminology) refers to a hypothesized source prior to the Deuteronomistic History but later than HDR; McCarter dates the source to the late eighth century BCE (1980a, 18–23). This source knew the text of most of what is now 1–2 Samuel and revised it according to a particular prophetic perspective. The source is most associated with the work of Antony Campbell (1986), from whom I adopt the designation “Prophetic Record.” Campbell dates the work to the late ninth century BCE, earlier than McCarter, but their results are still similar.

48. Examples of potential doublets include the introductions of David (1 Sam 16:1–13; 17:12–15), David’s introductions to Saul (1 Sam 16:14–23; 17:55–58), Saul’s attempts to pin David to the wall with a spear (1 Sam 18:10–11; 19:9–10), Saul’s schemes to have David die fighting the Philistines in order to become his son-in-law (the adjacent narratives of 1 Sam 18:17–19, 20–27), David under the auspices of Achish of Gath (1 Sam 22:11–16[10–15]; 27:1–28:2 and 29:1–11), the Ziphites informing Saul of David’s whereabouts and David’s subsequent sparing of Saul’s life (1 Sam 23:14–24:23[22]; 26:1–25), the two accounts of Saul’s death (1 Sam 31:1–13; 2 Sam 1:1–16), and the two accounts of David being made king in Hebron (2 Sam 5:1–2, 3). Moreover, at least two passages have the character of being conflation of two different sources: David’s victory over Goliath in 1 Sam 17 and David’s rendezvous with Jonathan in 1 Sam 20. The presence of doublets in 1 Samuel extends backward into the Saul narrative in 1 Sam 8–15 also, but this unit lies outside the scope of this study.

Table 2. Kyle McCarter's Model for Understanding the History of David's Rise ^a

History of David's Rise	Later Accretions (PR = Prophetic Record; Dtr = Deuteronomistic)
	(1 Sam) 15:35–16:13 (PR)
16:14–23	
17*	17:1–11, 32–40, 42–48a, 49, 51–54 (Dtr) ^b
	17:12–31, 41, 48b, 50, 55–58; 18:1–5, 10–11, 17–19, 29b–30 ^c
18:6–8a, 9, 12a, 13–16	
18:20–21a, 22–27	
18:28–29a; 19:1–7	
19:8–17	
	19:18–24 ^d
20:1–21:1[20:42b]*	20:11–17, 23, 40–42[42a] (Dtr)
21:2–10[1–9]	
21:11[10]–22:5	
22:6–23	
23:1–13	
	23:14–18 (Dtr)
	23:19–24:1 (Dtr)
	24:2–23[22] (Dtr)

a. McCarter presents his delimitation of HDR most succinctly in 1980b, 491–93; I filled in this table primarily from there. In some places I have supplemented the information here with the analysis in his commentaries (1980a, 1984), which are more thorough; my division of various units also conforms to his divisions in the commentaries. McCarter also attributes several half-verses to redactional expansions; I have not included all of these in the table (e.g., 1 Sam 18:21b).

b. McCarter suggests that these verses (the OG version of 1 Sam 17, thus without the MT pluses) provide a Deuteronomistically revised edition of an older account of David defeating a Philistine champion (see McCarter 1980a, 295–98 and the following footnote).

c. McCarter suggests that these verses provide a post-Deuteronomistic, “complete, alternative account of David's arrival and victory over Goliath [that] was interpolated somewhat heavy-handedly into some manuscripts of the completed story after the distinctive textual traditions had already begun to develop” (1980a, 298).

d. Of the origin of this passage, McCarter writes, “We are obliged ... to regard 19:18–24 as a late addition to the narrative in the spirit of the prophetic revision of other materials but of independent origin” (1980a, 330).

History of David's Rise	Later Accretions (PR = Prophetic Record; Dtr = Deuteronomistic)
	25:1 ^e
25:2–25, 27, 32–41, 26, 42–44	25:28–31 (Dtr)
26:1–25	
27:1–28:2	
28:3–10, 12b–16, 19–25	28:11–12a, 17–18 (PR)
29:1–11	
30:1–31	
31:1–13	
(2 Sam) 1:1–16	
1:17–27	
2:1–9, 10b	2:10a, 11 (Dtr)
2:12–32	
3:1–5 ^f	
3:6–8, 11–18a, 19–27, 30–39	3:9–10, 18b, 28–29 ^g (Dtr)
4:1–12	
5:3	5:1–2, 4–5 (Dtr)
5:6–10	

e. McCarter identifies this verse as redactional (1980a, 388).

f. McCarter vacillates somewhat about the origin of the list of David's sons in 2 Sam 3:2–5 (cf. 1984, 102).

g. McCarter attributes 3:28–29 to the Deuteronomist in his commentary (1984, 118) but does not mention it among his Deuteronomistic additions elsewhere (1980b, 493). I assume the latter is an accidental omission.

an *ad hoc* basis,⁴⁹ Halpern considers the pervasiveness of these doublets throughout the text of 1 Samuel as evidence of two parallel sources. Locating the beginning of the two sources earlier in the book in the Saul cycle, he follows the threads to establish two independent, self-contained narratives, which he labels the A and B

49. Some examples: he considers the story of David sparing Saul in 1 Sam 24 to be a later rewriting of the earlier account of the same in 1 Sam 26 (HDR); he considers the story of David's madness before Achish to be an accretion of unknown origin, independent of the primary account of David's mercenary employment with Achish in 1 Sam 27; 29 (HDR); he considers both accounts of Saul's death (1 Sam 31 and 2 Sam 1) to be part of HDR, but the second is not to be taken at face value by the reader because it comes from the mouth of a duplicitous Amalekite.

Table 3. Baruch Halpern's Model for Understanding 1 Samuel 8–2 Samuel 1 ^a

A Source	B Source	Redactor
	(1 Sam) 8	
9:1–10:13		
		10:14–16
	10:17–27	
	11	
	12	
13–14		
	15	
	16	
17:12–30(31), 41, 48b, 50, 55–58	17:1–11, 32–40, 42–48a, 49, 51–54	
18:1–5(6a), 10–11, 17–19, 30	18:(6a)6b–9, 12–16, 20–29	
	19	
20:1b–42		
21:1–24:23[22]		
	25	
	26	
	27	
	28:1–2	
28:3–25		
	29	
	30	
31		
	(2 Sam) 1	

a. This is taken from his divisions in Halpern 1981, 171; 2001, 277–79. Unfortunately, Halpern mostly ignores the background of the bulk of 2 Samuel. It appears that he considers it all a continuation of the B Source, but such a view would be far too simplistic.

sources (1981, 149–74).⁵⁰ The A source, which includes less about David than B, he characterizes as a Saul story for which the Davidic material is only secondary.⁵¹ In the B source, first Samuel dominates, then David. Halpern suggests that B is earlier than A and reflects a tradition more closely connected to David's historical reign (2001, 263–66). Overall, he breaks down the two sources as shown in table 3.

Halpern's methodology has much to recommend it, but his focus on the institution of the monarchy renders the study less meticulous in regard to 1 Sam 16–2 Sam 1, which concern us here, than in regard to the preceding chapters in 1 Samuel (and he does not continue his analysis beyond 2 Sam 1). It is therefore not surprising that several ensuing studies presented new breakdowns from the same methodological premise of two parallel sources, though often with widely varying results.⁵² The most recent of these deserves mention here, because although I will not follow this breakdown exactly (see below), my views align closely with it and it influences this study. This is the work of Jeremy Hutton, who himself builds upon the studies of Otto Kaiser and Ina Willi-Plein by treating the distinction between Jonathan and Michal as a decisive factor in disentangling the two sources. Hutton points out that these two children of Saul have nearly identical relationships with David: both Jonathan and Michal become intimates with David, discover a plot by Saul to kill David, then reveal it to him and assist in his escape, betraying their father (Hutton 2009, 241–42; cf. Kaiser 1990; Willi-Plein 2004, 163). Using this as a starting point, Hutton arrives at his own scheme of two narratives that parallel each other from 1 Sam 15–2 Sam 5 (2009, 228–88). The first, HDR₁, he characterizes as a collection of assorted stories praising David,⁵³ assembled largely as a

50. In a way, Halpern's theory was not new, but an adaptation of the early post-Wellhausen source critics who attempted to follow the narrative strands of the Pentateuch throughout the books of Samuel (such as Budde and Cornill; see McCarter 1980a, 13). Such ideas were discarded by the middle of the twentieth century, however, so I expect Halpern and others were influenced by them little, if at all.

51. Halpern further states that in A, "the David materials seem to date from an era later than that which fostered their parallels in the B source" (1981, 171). This does not reconcile easily with his later comment that David serves as the protagonist in both sources (2001, 264). Moreover, he does not remark on the inconcinnities within either source. For example, he includes all of 1 Sam 20:1b–42[42a] within A, despite the fact that vv. 40–42[42a] contradict the preceding narrative and must derive from another hand. He says that the A source "incorporates a line of tradition sympathetic to Saul" (2001, 264), yet he attributes to it such passages as Saul's extermination of the priests of Nob in 1 Sam 21–22 and Saul's clandestine meeting with the witch of En Dor in 1 Sam 28:3–25, both of which suggest anti-Saul polemic. He also includes all of 1 Sam 25 within B, despite the fact that vv. 28–31 seem to derive from a later hand. Perhaps he would attribute such peculiarities to the "occasional [Deuteronomistic] apostils" (1981, 152) that appear in 1 Samuel.

52. For a summary of these studies, see Hutton 2009, 235–39.

53. Hutton clearly assumes that HDR₁ was favorable to David, but it is difficult to determine

Table 4. Jeremy Hutton's Model for Understanding the History(-ies) of David's Rise ^a

HDR ₁	HDR ₂	Other
		(1 Sam) 16:1–13 ^b
16:14–23		
17:1–11, 32–40, 42–48a, 49, 51–54	17:12*, 13–14, 16–18, 20–23a, 24–30, 41, 48b, [50], 55–58 ^c	
18:6aβb*–8a*, 9, 12a, 13–16, 20–21a, 22–26a, 27–29a	18:1–2, [3], 4–5, 8b, 17–18*, [29b–30]	
	19:1–7	
19:8–17*		
		19:18–24 ^d
	20:1–10, 18–22, 24–39 ^e	20:11–17, 23, 40–42[42a] ^f
	21:1[20:42b]	
21:2–16[1–15]*		
		22:1–2, 3–5 ^g
22:[6–8], 9–23		
23:1–13*		

a. This is taken from his divisions in Hutton 2009, 365–66.

b. Hutton considers this passage “a tertiary introduction to David added at some point by the author-editor who compiled the Prophetic Record (over against the introduction in 16:18, which leads directly into the common text of LXX^B and MT; and that in 17:12, 14)” (2009, 252).

c. The verses of 1 Sam 17 which Hutton does not attribute to either HDR₁ or HDR₂ he asserts are harmonizations (2009, 256). For his entire treatment of 1 Sam 17–18, see 2009, 245–65.

d. Hutton says that this enigmatic passage “comes from unspecified origin,” though he shortly afterward favors the Prophetic Record as its source (2009, 274 n. 162).

e. Hutton's discussion lists only 20:1–4, 18–22, 24–39 as part of HDR₂. Elsewhere, however, he brackets out only 20:11–17, 23, 40–42, so I assume that the omission of 20:5–10 from HDR₂ is a modern scribal error, so to speak.

f. Hutton considers these verses, as well as 23:16–18, to be a secondary intrusion into HDR₂'s story of David and Jonathan (2009, 267–69). They all concern a pact between the two and were “designed to solidify the reader's belief that Jonathan bore no ill will against David” (2009, 267).

g. Hutton does not confidently attribute these verses to any source. He suggests that either Adullam (1 Sam 22:1–2) or Moab (1 Sam 22:3–5) could have originally followed 21:2–10[1–9] instead of Gath (1 Sam 21:11–16[10–15]) as David's destination after departing Nob (2009, 275–76).

HDR ₁	HDR ₂	Other
	23:14aβ–15, 19–28*	23:16–18
24:1–23[22]*		
		25:1 ^h
		25:2–42 ⁱ
	26:1–25*	
	27:1–28:2*	
28:3–25*		
	29:1–30:31*	
31:1–13		
	(2 Sam) 1:1–27	
	[2:1–4a]	
2:4b + 21:12, 13a*, 14aα*		
5:[4–5], 6–10, [13–16]		
21:1–6*, 8–11, 13b, 14*		

h. Hutton considers this verse a “redactional joint” (2009, 277).

i. Hutton writes of the Nabal/Abigail story only, “I attribute 1 Sam 25:2–42 to neither History of David’s Rise. It bears some degree of continuity with both stories but insufficient elements to link it to either one” (2009, 270 n. 149).

response to heroic tales about Saul (2009, 365). HDR₁ is necessarily contemporary to David since it finds its stimulus in the attempt to exalt David during his rivalry with Saul. The second source, HDR₂, Hutton treats as an alternative assortment of David stories that sought to further (and more explicitly) aggrandize their protagonist but, unlike HDR₁, knew nothing of David’s rival predecessor. He dates this complex to the end of David’s reign (2009, 273).⁵⁴ Hutton ends up with the two sources outlined in table 4.

exactly how favorable—he describes it as “laudatory literature” (2009, 365) at one point, but on the next page as “relatively ambivalent” to David (2009, 366).

54. Hutton’s recognition that both HDR₁ and HDR₂ represent contemporary (or nearly contemporary) traditions about David is the main factor that aligns my study with his more than with those of his European predecessors. For example, I concur almost fully with Hutton’s statement, “In effect, although I believe that Kaiser and Willi-Plein have correctly adduced the single most important criterion of source-critical separation of 1 Sam 16:14–2 Samuel 5* and also have put forth cogent discussions of the attitudes in each group of texts described, both models suffer from a certain myopic restraint with respect to the amount of Samuel to be apportioned to earlier sources. If Halpern was too liberal with his qualification

The final scholarly model I will include here is that of John Van Seters. Although my comments throughout this chapter should demonstrate that I disagree with Van Seters's fundamental assumptions about the books of Samuel, I will discuss his work briefly for several reasons. First, his recent monograph *The Biblical Saga of King David* provides one of the most recent monograph-length studies of the sources of the David narrative, and he provides a thorough analysis of nearly every pertinent passage. Second, although I disagree with Van Seters on several issues concerning the whole, I agree with his analysis of several individual passages, especially on points of intertextuality among various passages. Moreover, his analysis helped me refine my own thinking even about certain passages about which we do not draw the same conclusions. Finally, Van Seters represents a position that has gained more proponents in the last few decades, though they remain in the minority.⁵⁵

Van Seters begins his analysis with two arguments against the historicity of the David story. One argument he bases on recent socioarchaeological work that asserts that Judah did not develop into a state until the late ninth and early eighth centuries, several generations after the life of any historical David (2009, 53–89).⁵⁶ The second argument he bases on anachronisms in the text, particularly the presence of mercenaries, which he thinks only make sense in the context of the Persian period in the latter half of the first millennium BCE (2009, 90–120).⁵⁷ Van Seters

and distribution of doublets, and thus unable to account for multiple exemplars of a given tradition, Kaiser and Willi-Plein have erred too conservatively by not perceiving the full extent to which doublets run throughout the *entirety* of 1 Samuel 16–2 Samuel 5” (2009, 242–43). I would qualify this in one regard: I do not necessarily think their models suffer from myopia *per se*, but from a hierarchy of evidence with which neither I nor Hutton agree. For example, Willi-Plein emphasizes the attitude toward hereditary kingship as a means of determining the *Sitz im Leben* of a given unit, whereas Hutton emphasizes the conception of Transjordan as a diagnostic feature. Both create a coherent hermeneutical circle; I just find Hutton's much more persuasive. For more on the idea of a hermeneutical circle, see my remarks at the end of this section (pp. 194–95).

55. In this light, it will be interesting to see how Van Seters influences the field now that he has elaborated (and slightly modified) his innovative earlier analysis of the David story (Van Seters 1983, 264–91).

56. I question this on the grounds that the type of “state” depicted in the biblical record and assumed by McCarter and others is not the type of state that would leave a significant archaeological imprint. I discuss this more in my discussion of the *Sitz im Leben* of TDRR; see §5.4.

57. I find it ironic that Van Seters writes sympathetically of employing the concept of the *longue durée* to determine the reality of tenth-century Palestine (2009, 83–84), but then excludes evidence of mercenaries in pre-Neo-Assyrian times *tout court* despite their acknowledged employment in earlier centuries: “I am not concerned about the use of mercenaries in the second millennium because there is no evidence of a continuity of their use in Syria-Palestine from the second to the first millennium. Thus, the Habiru bands

thus excludes the possibility that the David story had any historiographic character; instead it is entirely or almost entirely fiction and shares a genre with medieval Icelandic sagas. Turning to source criticism, Van Seters adopts a two-source model superficially similar to those of Halpern and Hutton, but one that works from significantly different premises. The earlier of the two sources he dubs account A and attributes to the Deuteronomist. Account A is a purely ideological construct intended to legitimate the claim of the house of David to all of Israel, hence the fabrication of a united monarchy under the famous forebear. In this source David can do no wrong and serves as the ideal founder of the state. This Deuteronomistic ideology was undermined by the inclusion of the *David Saga*, Van Seters's account B, which was composed and incorporated during the Persian period.⁵⁸ Account B essentially provides a satire of account A, parodying foundational Deuteronomistic ideas such as the sanctity of Yahweh's anointed and the divine promise of a perpetual dynasty to David. It accomplishes this by besmirching the ideal portrait of David by accusing him of countless sins and of spreading injustice throughout the land—which, according to account B, set the standard for the future monarchies in Israel and Judah. Van Seters unravels the two sources as outlined in table 5.

As stated above, the four scholarly models described above present only a sample of those that have been proposed. Most models would, however, find a location somewhere on the spectrum between McCarter's model of a single, historiographic, Davidic composition on the one side, and Van Seters's model of a dual, fictional, late-monarchic/Persian-period saga on the other. My own interpretation of HDR is as follows:

Pace McCarter, I consider the consistent doublets persuasive evidence that at least two roughly contemporaneous David complexes developed in parallel. Although each of McCarter's explanations is individually feasible, when viewed in concert, the pervasiveness of the doublets is too much to ignore. I also think the nature of some of the doublets argues against viewing them as later (Deuteronomistic) redactional additions. For example, in 1 Sam 20 the concluding verses must represent not a later addition to a base text, but a (clumsy) conflation of two parallel texts. The conclusion of this chapter renders the whole somewhat incoherent, and therefore cannot "serve the editorial purposes of the deuteronomistic historian" (McCarter 1980b, 493). But none of the proposed models of parallel sources is entirely convincing either. Halpern's model, for example, ignores the

of the second-millennium Levant are no longer mentioned in first-millennium sources" (2009, 100 n. 27; cf. also 2009, 119). This is a weak argument, essentially treating absence of evidence as evidence of absence (and excluding 1–2 Samuel itself as evidence).

58. Van Seters writes with admirable clarity for the most part. One area where he is not quite so clear, however, is his use of the term "*David Saga*." In the first part of the book he seems to use this term to refer to the entire David complex in the *textus receptus*, but in the latter part of the book he uses it to refer solely to account B, the antimonarchical narrative strand composed in the Persian period.

distinction between Jonathan and Michal in the two sources (he attributes the entirety of 1 Sam 19 to the A source), nor does it adequately account for the diachronic development of the text.⁵⁹ Hutton's model improves on these drawbacks, but presents other difficulties, such as the lack of incorporating some apparently early traditions—such as the episode with Nabal and Abigail in 1 Sam 25—in either his HDR₁ or HDR₂, while he does incorporate some much later material—such as the MT pluses to the OG in the story of David and Goliath—in his tenth-century sources, which strikes me as extremely unlikely. Hutton also draws some questionable conclusions when he applies his model of HDR to the ensuing Succession Narrative, but I will address this in the following section. Van Seters, meanwhile, builds on certain premises that I do not accept and concludes with a system that I do not find completely coherent. He interprets his account B as an antimonarchical source, which is defensible when dealing with the so-called Court History in 2 Sam 10–20*, but he has to stretch his interpretation of several earlier passages to make this apply throughout.⁶⁰

In sum, while all of the proposed models for understanding the material commonly known as HDR have certain merits, none is perfectly convincing. I suspect this is not due to any persistent flaw in the various source critics' methodologies, but an inevitable result of attempting to explain the origins of a text that combined multiple traditions and underwent centuries of transmission before evolving into what we now have.⁶¹ Consequently, I will not offer here yet another model

59. To be fair, Halpern does not intend his disentanglement of the sources to account for diachrony. But this causes problems especially with his treatment of passages often attributed to the Prophetic Record, such as Samuel's anointment of David in 1 Sam 16:1–13 and Saul's summoning of Samuel's ghost in 1 Sam 28:3–25, which Halpern attributes to different sources (B and A, respectively).

60. Van Seters interprets a variety of passages that appear to defend David as in fact condemning him. For example, he interprets the story of David sparing Saul in 1 Sam 26 as David publicly humiliating Saul so as to symbolically strip him of his inviolability (2009, 202). This strains credulity. Van Seters assumes that in 1 Sam 27:1–28:2, wherein David raids surrounding peoples while under the auspices of the Philistines, the author deliberately contrasts David's deception of Achish with Ittai's loyalty to David in 2 Sam 15, 18 (2009, 192–93, 203–5). Such subtle textual interplay to emphasize a major point is not convincing. Elsewhere Van Seters interprets David's restoration of Merib-Baal in 2 Sam 9 as demonstrating David's lack of compassion and political calculation. While historians may question David's motives in this incident, the purpose of this text is obviously to show David's loyalty to Jonathan. Van Seters's claim that in this passage "nothing in David's actions ... shows any emotion or tenderness" (2009, 286) misreads the plain sense of the text (cf. 2 Sam 9:1, 7).

61. Though it is an obvious point, it is worth noting that source critics are limited by only having the pieces of material that made it in to the final text, not those that were left out. Thus one cannot responsibly posit that a given source had a passage that a redactor excluded from the current text, or else one could invent any number of original passages

Table 5. John Van Seters's Model for Understanding the David Saga ^a

Account A (Deuteronomistic David story)	Account B (David Saga)	Other
		(1 Sam) 15:1–16:13 ^b
16:14–23		
	17:1–18:4, 6a	
18:5–9*, (10–11), 12–16		
18:17–30		
19:1–17		
	19:18–21:10[9]	
21:11–16[10–15]		
22:1–5		
	22:6–23	
23:1–5, 15–18, 24b–28	23:6–14, 9–24a	
24:1–23[22] ^c		
	25:1–44	
	26:1–25	
	27:1–28:2*	
28:1a, 4		
		28:3–25*
	29:1–11	
	30:1–31	
31:1–13		
(2 Sam) 1:1*, 2–4, 11–12, 17–27	(2 Sam) 1:1aβb, 5–10, 13–16	
2:1–2aα, 3	2:2aβb	
	2:4–4:12	
5:1–2, 3b, (4), 6–12, 17–25	5:3a, (4), 5, 13–16	
6:2–3a, 5, 15, 17–19	6:1, 3b–4, 6–14, 16, 20–23	
7:1–10a, (10b–11aα), 11aβ–29		
8:1		
8:2–15 ^d	8:16–18	
	9–20[*]	
10:15–19a ^e		

	(1 Kgs) 1:1–52	
2:1–4, 10–12 ^f	2:5–9, 13–46	

- a. This is taken from Van Seters's appendix dedicated to the division of sources (2009, 361–63). I include all the material sequentially; in the early chapters of 2 Samuel he rearranges the sequence somewhat and orders the passages topically.
- b. Van Seters considers this unit to be a secondary addition; he regards 28:3–25 as the natural sequel to this unit and a product of the same hand (1983, 261–64).
- c. For this section, Van Seters's official source division reads "1 Sam 24:1–23[23:1–24:22]" (2009, 362). I assume the bracketed section is an error for 23:29–24:22.
- d. Van Seters includes only 8:2–14 in this section of his appendix; v. 15 appears to have been lost in the shuffle. In the main volume he attributes this to the Deuteronomistic author on several occasions, however (2009, 94–95, 303, 307).
- e. Van Seters includes 10:15–19 in their entirety in his appendix, without the modification of the final verse. But elsewhere he includes 10:19b in the David Saga (2009, 225, 363).
- f. Van Seters does not include these verses in his appendix on the division of sources, but in the main volume he asserts, "These verses are so clearly in the form, style and language of Dtr that they cannot be denied to this author" (2009, 267).

of disentangling the various sources of 1 Sam 16–2 Sam 5. Instead I will employ a somewhat different approach. I accept that, at a minimum, two older traditions of Davidic historiography underlie this block of text, which were supplemented by later redactors (most notably the Deuteronomist, but there seem to be some non-Deuteronomistic later accretions as well). I will not attempt to distinguish between the two older traditions because I am not confident a perfect solution exists,⁶² and such a distinction is not mandatory for this study anyway since both sources manifest a strong apologetic mode. I will, however, exclude from analy-

as it is convenient. But such redactional exclusion must have happened. As an example, Van Seters notes that when confronted with the problem that his model of the Succession Narrative assumed David's death without actually reporting it, Würthwein suggested that this source did have a death notice for David, but a later editor removed it. Van Seters justifiably critiques this as "inconsistent 'redactional' activity [which] is special pleading and makes anything possible" (2009, 330). But by all appearances, redactional activity was inconsistent. Würthwein's suggestion is indeed "special pleading" and not acceptable methodology, but it is not necessarily wrong. As a source critic, one must work from the assumption that redactional activity was consistent and conformed to a certain norm while knowing that this assumption is probably wrong.

62. I do not intend this to sound overly defeatist. Although I suspect no model will delineate the various prior sources with absolute precision, I would not go so far as Carlson, who writes that the "task of reconstructing a pre-Deuteronomistic cycle of tradition in 1–2 Sam. is so complicated as to be impossible" (1964, 43). Moreover, I think such efforts are useful even when they result in only approximations of the original sources.

sis later material, since it derives from an entirely different context in which the apologetic urgency was absent.

In my outline below, I examine each unit of text on a case-by-case basis. One might characterize this as having elements of the approaches employed by both McCarter and Hutton. Upon delving deeper, one finds that both these scholars treat HDR as a pastiche, although for different reasons. McCarter writes of HDR that “even in its pre-deuteronomistic form it is somewhat heterogeneous in appearance” (1980b, 490), which he attributes to the diversity of materials incorporated by the author (1980b, 493 n. 12).⁶³ But he maintains that despite this heterogeneous appearance, minus its later accretions HDR is a unified work with singular purpose.⁶⁴ Hutton explains the heterogeneity by describing HDR₁ as “A loose collection of stories—all of which potentially hung together as part of a whole but none of which was entirely indispensable in a recitation—gathered around the figure of David” (2009, 365).⁶⁵ He characterizes his HDR₂, also, as a “loose collection” of episodes (2009, 366).

Before leaving the discussion of HDR, some remarks on the methodology are in order. There is a tendency among scholars of the David narratives to chastise other scholars for circular arguments. Such chastisement is nearly always accurate, but it is also hypocritical since the accusing scholars then collapse into circular reasoning themselves. This is because some degree of circularity in establishing models whereby to understand the origins of the Samuel material is inevitable.⁶⁶ There are few external controls with which interpretations can be assessed, and such controls as we do have are debatable.⁶⁷ Consequently, all one can do is estab-

63. The view of this complex as a bricolage was anticipated as early as Weiser, who wrote of “das vielschichtige Traditionsmaterial, das ihm [den unbekannten Verfasser der Aufstiegsgeschichte Davids] zu Befund stand” (1966, 354).

64. McCarter attributes HDR to an author composing text according to his purposes: “Nevertheless it is possible in the opinion of most recent scholars to demonstrate that [HDR] has an overarching unity of theme and purpose. This unity is often explained as the consequence of the work of an author who assembled materials of diverse traditional background and impressed upon them his own point of view. An alternative explanation, which is accepted in the present paper, is that the unity reflects the presence of an underlying, more or less unified composition by an author with a clear point of view” (1980b, 490–91).

65. Thus, McCarter’s view differs from that of Hutton in that the latter’s conception of a “loose collection of stories” lacks the central character and singular purpose by which McCarter identifies HDR.

66. Note that this idea is anticipated in Hutton 2009, 244 n. 61.

67. For example, I submit that the OG minuses from MT in 1 Sam 17–18 serve as a clear indicator that the omitted verses represent a tradition not yet incorporated into the primary narrative, but some scholars view them as a deliberate omission aimed at harmonization. Van Seters considers the use of mercenaries a blatant anachronism and a diagnostic feature of Persian-period texts (2009, 99–118); many others, including me, would disagree. One of

lish a model of interpretation that (a) conforms to one's hierarchy of evidence and (b) is internally coherent.

The former criterion, that of hierarchy of evidence, is the prevailing factor that distinguishes various scholarly analyses of this material. The reason that McCarter, Halpern, McKenzie, Hutton, and I (and several others) read the text as reflecting authentic, early traditions is that we all situate the apologetic mode of the text at or near the top of the hierarchy. Methodologically, I privilege the apologetic mode because I can coherently explain (to my mind, anyway) all other aspects of the Samuel narrative in light of this, but I cannot account for the apology with other models (such as those that treat 1–2 Samuel as a late fiction). Until a feasible alternative explanation of the countless apologetic features of 1–2 Samuel appears (Van Seters generally neglects to provide a persuasive alternative explanation, which is a major desideratum for his work; the lack of an alternative explanation is also the most significant weakness of Wright 2014), I will continue to subordinate other aspects of analysis to this. Incidentally, although in this case I find the results of internal analysis of the text to be the most weighty, I do not suggest that ideological- or literary-critical methods should as a rule be privileged over textual-, source-, historical-, redaction-, or other critical methods. Textual analysis requires not hard-and-fast rules, but prudent judgment.⁶⁸

This sketch much suffice to justify any preference for the more loosely defined Traditions of David's Rise and Reign over the traditional History of David's Rise. We must now look at the second major proposed complex in the David story, commonly referred to as the Succession Narrative.

*The Succession Narrative.*⁶⁹ The second major David complex treated by scholars of the twentieth century is the Succession Narrative (SN). Although no less controversial than HDR, SN may surrender itself more easily to analysis because it seems to lack the pervasive doublets that complicate source-critical analysis of the earlier text.⁷⁰ The main issue of SN, as we shall see, concerns the relative and absolute dating of its various subunits. Rost's famous model, which dominated

the few agreed-upon diagnostic elements is the presence of Deuteronomistic language, but not all of this language is obvious and scholars debate the extent of the redactional hand in several passages.

68. See McCarter 1986b, 18–20; his comments here on textual criticism specifically apply to other critical methods.

69. For an excellent review of the numerous issues that beset the Succession Narrative, see Hutton 2009, 176–227. Although I do not follow all of his conclusions, his meticulous interaction with earlier scholarship demands praise, and he provides an excellent history of scholarship *inter alia*.

70. I write that it “seems to” lack pervasive doublets because it could be that this unit preserves several doublets that have thus far escaped detection and scholarly discussion. See my comments below on, for example, the Merib-Baal passages and the episode of the dueling counsel of Hushai and Ahithophel.

scholarship for so long but retains few adherents in its particulars today, offered the simplest solution. Through thematic and stylistic analysis, Rost concluded that 2 Sam 9–20* and 1 Kgs 1–2*, along with a few brief earlier passages, comprise “an integrated, self-contained story” (1982, 114) that “was written despite everything else ‘in majorem gloriam Salomonis’—to the greater glory of Solomon” (1982, 105). Rost viewed the passage as united by a common cast of characters, all of whom are introduced upon entering the stage and eventually exit (1982, 102), by a common theology featuring the indirect intervention of Yahweh (1982, 106), and above all by an overarching theme, namely, “the question: ‘Who will sit on David’s throne?’” (1982, 89).⁷¹ Rost’s view was adopted by two major figures of the mid-twentieth century, Noth and von Rad, but began to be questioned by the following generation of scholars. Sections of text were gradually removed, diminishing the literary complex and calling into question whether a source that could appropriately be called a “Succession Narrative” ever existed.⁷² We will explore how Rost’s unified composition unraveled piece by piece.

The first excision came in the form of the Court History. In a modification of Rost’s model that influenced nearly all later treatments, James Flanagan distinguished parts of the narrative that emphasized David’s legitimacy from those

71. Rost also included the rather subjective element of narrative artistry in his analysis. His infatuation with the story reveals itself through his frequent superlative descriptions of it: “It cannot be gainsaid that we have a quite outstanding piece of Hebrew narrative art here, perhaps, indeed, in the complexity of its plot, in the wealth of personalities taking part and in the fine organization of its structure, the most outstanding of all” (1982, 102). “Now we are at an end. The finest work of Hebrew narrative art has passed before our eyes” (1982, 116). It is ironic, therefore, that later source critics have stripped away layer after layer to propose models wherein a bevy of authors contributed to this text over centuries (cf. Van Seters 2009, 32–34). For my part, while I cannot help but admire Rost’s passion for his subject and I too appreciate the entire David complex, I find it difficult to declare any text “the finest work of Hebrew narrative art” when a significant portion of the story involves meeting a series of acquaintances while walking towards, then back from, a river. In fact, while some critics have taken the literary quality of this complex as a clue to its late date, I would tentatively suggest the opposite. Nothing in the Succession Narrative (as defined by Rost) approaches the intricate plot or beautiful didacticism of, for example, Esther or the Joseph story (for an opposite view working from the same basic premise, see Barton 2004).

72. Interestingly, reading the scholarship of the last four decades on SN feels like reading Rost’s work in reverse. As he goes through each section, demonstrating the interconnectedness and establishing the unity of the whole, so later scholars go through each section and demonstrate the isolatedness of various pieces to establish the disunity of the whole. The groundwork for this was laid as early as Flanagan: “Rost stressed the importance of the first two chapters of 1 Kings and looked upon the succession described there as the key for the understanding of the entire work. ... In a narrative as tightly woven as this, it would have been better to ask which sections could be removed without destroying the unity of the entire account” (1972, 173).

that concerned Solomon's succession (1972, 172–73). He acknowledged that while several aspects of 1 Kgs 1–2 point back to the revolt of Absalom in 2 Samuel, there is nothing in the earlier narrative to suggest that it anticipates the Solomonic material. He thus identified the Solomonic material, which consists of the Bathsheba episode in 2 Sam 11:2–12:25 and the account of the succession in 1 Kgs 1–2, as a later stratum and bracketed out 2 Sam 8:16–11:1 and 12:26–20:26 as a separate, preexisting document. He dubbed this the Court History since it contains the “history of the difficulties and challenges that David faced in maintaining his control over the kingdoms of Judah and Israel” (1972, 177). He argued for the unity of the Court History on the basis of a chiasmic pattern that served as the structure of the entire complex (1972, 177–81).⁷³ But while the chiasm outlined by Flanagan was long accepted regarding the core of the Transjordanian flight and Absalom's rebellion, scholars immediately questioned how tightly it held the extremities of the Court History together. Thus, after the loss of the David and Bathsheba story in 2 Sam 11:2–12:25, the war story in which it is embedded (2 Sam 10:1–11:1; 12:26–31) was also extricated from the Court History in the view of most scholars.⁷⁴

With 2 Sam 10–12 out of the picture, the story of Merib-Baal in 2 Sam 9 comes into focus. Although this story sets the stage for the later war of words between Merib-Baal and Ziba in the Court History (2 Sam 16:1–4; 19:25–31[24–30]), there are two obstacles to leaving it as one of the introductory pieces of Rost's SN. First, while 2 Sam 9 introduces Merib-Baal as the son of Jonathan, the later narrative refers to him as the son of Saul (2 Sam 19:25[24]; 20:8; this is also assumed in 2 Sam 16:3). Secondly, David's inquiry in 2 Sam 9:1 makes little sense decontextual-

73. But see Conroy's reservations: “While there are many acute observations in Flanagan's analysis, the schema as a whole must be said to suffer from an excess in the spirit of geometry. . . . The search for chiasmus and other forms of structural geometry appears at times to exert a fatal fascination on students of Biblical texts. A sound antidote is available, however, if one first carries out a detailed analysis of each pericope and of the intrinsic narrative dynamism of the story as a whole (in the case of a narrative text). This will provide a solid foundation on which one can then erect such structural edifices as the text actually permits. In many cases these edifices may turn out to be of more modest proportions than some of the elaborate constructions arrived at in more intuitive ways” (1978, 145). I agree with Conroy's point generally, though I do think the story of Absalom's rebellion does reveal at least a basic chiasmic structure.

74. The relationship of the war report in 2 Sam 10:1–11:1; 12:26–31 to the story of David and Bathsheba (2 Sam 11:2–12:25) remains a subject of debate. Some assume that the war report was specially selected by the author of the inner story to contextualize it and thus treat 2 Sam 10–12 as a unit (McCarter 1984, 275–76). Others consider the two units to have been separate until coalescing at a fairly late textual stage (Hutton 2009, 189–92). I assume the latter, though unlike Hutton I presume that the war report was an early archival source and entered the surrounding narrative prior to the story of David and Bathsheba. There is nothing particularly apologetic about the war report, however, so its date has little impact on this study.

ized, as Rost has it; it seems to presuppose a tragedy befalling Saul's descendant(s). Two texts present themselves as viable candidates and precursors to 2 Sam 9. Some suggest that this chapter originally followed 2 Sam 21:1–14, itself a displaced, independent narrative concerned with the execution of several Saulides (McCarter 1984, 262–64, who follows several earlier scholars). Others suggest that 2 Sam 9 should follow 2 Sam 4, wherein Saul's son and successor Ish-Baal was murdered (Gunn 1978, 68 and others). Either of these stands to reason, and both situate the Merib-Baal episode outside the confines of Rost's SN and in a separate complex of passages.⁷⁵

With 2 Sam 9–12 and 1 Kgs 1–2 attributed by most scholars to varied independent sources, we are left with a core Court History of 2 Sam 13–20. But the unity of even this diminished block of text has been questioned in various ways. Recently, on several grounds scholars have argued that a story of Absalom's rebellion (2 Sam 18:1–19:9a*) had independent life and was only secondarily augmented by the story of David's flight to and return from Transjordan (2 Sam 15:7–17:29*; 19:9b–20:13*). This thesis may well be the case, but the argument is complex and does not warrant further attention here since it has little bearing on this study.⁷⁶

Turning our attention to the Solomonic material of 2 Sam 11:2–12:25 and 1 Kgs 1–2, which Flanagan extricated from the Court History, another fracture appears. Steven McKenzie, among many others, has argued that the episode of David and Bathsheba derived from a different hand than that responsible for 1 Kgs 1–2. He noted that “1 Kgs 1–2 does not presuppose any of the events or characters of 2 Sam 11–12” (McKenzie 2000b, 133). Furthermore, the two units portray both Bathsheba and Nathan in antipodal terms—Bathsheba appears as a passive non-character in 2 Sam 11–12, then an active power player in 1 Kgs 1–2; Nathan transforms from the quintessential prophet condemning the king for abuse of power in the earlier passage to a deceitful conspirator concerned with self-preservation in the latter.⁷⁷ Apart from the fact that Bathsheba and Nathan appear in both passages (and rarely elsewhere), the two passages could not be more dissimilar. Thus

75. For further comments on 2 Sam 9, see below, p. 212.

76. See Hutton 2009, 201–11 for a précis. Following Hutton, I am not convinced that the Transjordanian flight scene is a late Deuteronomistic complex, but even if it were it would not significantly alter the conclusions of this study.

77. The difference in Nathan's character was observed by Rost, whose amusing explanation deserves to be repeated here: “The dogmatic view that the pericope [2 Sam 11:2–12:25*] should be deleted because Nathan has in it a quite different role from that in 1 Kgs 1 is hardly convincing. Of course it must be admitted that Nathan seems all too entangled in worldly affairs to bring any great credit upon his vocation as prophet. But other prophets have also intervened with a greater or lesser force in the progress of history and in doing so have shown themselves to be at least as much ‘party men’ as Nathan is here – a fact which did not detract from their prophetic activity and the respect given them as prophets” (1982, 79).

both McKenzie and McCarter attribute 2 Sam 11–12 to a prophetic redactor,⁷⁸ an attribution that should be upheld.⁷⁹

While several scholars located seams divorcing certain passages from an originally unified SN, others sought to extend Rost's boundaries to include the passage of 2 Sam 2:8(or 2:12)–4:12 (cf. Segal 1965, 323–24; Schulte 1972, 138–80; Gunn 1978, 66–70 and others). This earlier passage introduces Joab (2 Sam 2:13), who plays a pivotal role in Rost's SN.⁸⁰ Joab's murders of Abner (2 Sam 3:27) and Amasa (2 Sam 20:10) serve as the justification for his execution by Benaiah in 1 Kgs 2:5–6, 32–33. Merib-Baal also appears first in the earlier complex (2 Sam 4:4), backgrounding him before he takes center stage in 2 Sam 9; 16:1–4; 19:25–31[24–30]. Moreover, as stated above, David's quest for a Saulide to whom he can show favor in 2 Sam 9:1 would make good sense following the assassination of Ish-Baal in 2 Sam 4. As one can see, however, this further complicates matters insofar as several of the arguments to include 2 Sam 2:8–4:12 in SN are based on connections to passages, such as 2 Sam 9 or 1 Kgs 2, that were meanwhile excluded from SN by other scholars.⁸¹ Additionally, although this block of text predominantly points forward to later material, it demonstrates some connection with earlier ma-

78. The two disagree on the date of the prophetic redactor, however. McCarter places his Prophetic History in a pre-Deuteronomistic period, namely, the end of the eighth century (1980a, 22; cf. 1984, 290). McKenzie considers this passage part of a post-Deuteronomistic prophetic cycle (2000b, 134).

79. Pace Hutton, who considers 2 Sam 11:1–12:25* and 1 Kgs 1–2* to comprise the original Solomonic apology. His normally impeccable methodology contains a flaw here, since he includes the 2 Samuel material due to form-critical considerations with other apologies. Following the structure of apologies outlined by Hoffner and Ishida, Hutton is compelled to provide a passage documenting the “unworthy predecessor” in Solomon's apology. As I point out above in §1.5, however, the “unworthy predecessor” is not a mandatory element of any apology but a motif that could be employed if the circumstances called for it. Since Solomon succeeded his father after a natural death, he did not need to besmirch his predecessor's legacy; in fact, such propaganda would have undermined him as part of David's dynasty. Hutton falls into the trap here of treating ancient Near Eastern apologetic as a literary genre; it is not, and therefore one cannot use form criticism as a tool for analysis. For more on this, see Knapp 2013.

80. Joab's name first appears in 1 Sam 26:6 where Abishai is introduced as the “brother of Joab.” It is interesting that despite playing no role in the story prior to this point, the author here considers Joab the appropriate point of reference for Abishai.

81. This does not apply to Schulte, one of the first to connect 2 Sam 2:8–4:12 with the later material in 2 Samuel. She worked from an entirely different model, espousing a single source consisting of 2 Sam 2–4; 6; 21; 24; 9–20; 1 Kgs 1–2. Unlike others who sought to modify Rost's model, Schulte favored jettisoning it altogether: “Wenn wir den Hauptbestand des II. Samuelbuches unter dem Titel ‘David-Geschichten’ zusammenfassen, so geschieht das in bewußter Ablehnung von Rosts Begriff der ‘Thronfolgegeschichten’. Dieser Ausdruck ist nicht nur das Ergebnis einer falschen Abgrenzung, sondern auch einer fehlerhaften

terial, especially in the explicit comparison of David's response to Ish-Baal's murderers to his response to Saul's murderers (2 Sam 4:9–12, recalling 2 Sam 1:13–16). In sum, 2 Sam 2:8–4:12 occupies something of a no man's land, interplaying with other material scattered throughout the David complex.

Finally, in addition to separating independent blocks of text, some scholars have suggested various redactional strata throughout SN as a whole. Ernst Würthwein, working from the premise that the original edition of SN was anti-Solomonic (*contra* Rost), suggested a series of later insertions that permitted a more favorable reading (1974, 16–17). These included passages that shed favorable light upon Solomon's party (for example, Zadok; 2 Sam 15:24–26, 29) and demonized his opponents (for example, Joab; 2 Sam 18:10–14).⁸²

Overall, despite its continued role as the starting point for scholarly models of understanding the material concerning David's reign in Samuel and Kings, little of Rost's famous hypothesis of a sweeping, unified SN survives in a recognizable form. We are left instead with another patchwork of independent traditions grafted together in ways difficult to discern. In some cases one can establish a relative chronology of the layers of tradition—for example, I submit that 1 Kgs 1–2 drew on (preexistent) material in 2 Sam 3; 15–20, and that 2 Sam 11:2–12:25 was incorporated into the narrative at a later stage than most of the rest of 2 Samuel—but often questions of strata and influence remain unanswerable.⁸³

Summary of the material about David in 1–2 Samuel. We have now examined the two classically described major sources about David, the History of David's Rise and the Succession Narrative, and neither source appears as recognizable as scholarly consensus held through much of the twentieth century. Instead, these units, as well as the other Davidic material in 2 Samuel not generally assigned to either source (2 Sam 7–8; 21–24), seem to have incorporated diverse traditional material. Undoubtedly certain collections of traditions coalesced into longer units, but these units are difficult to dissect, so that when approaching the text macroscopically it is easier to speak of compilers and redactors than authors (*contra* Van Seters). The entire block dedicated to David, 1 Sam 16–1 Kgs 2, has the character of a bricolage.

Bestimmung dessen, worum es in diesen Geschichten geht. Es wäre wünschenswert, wenn er aus dem Sprachgebrauch der Forschung wieder verschwände" (1972, 138).

82. Würthwein's hypothesis of this redaction stood within a series of contributions by European scholars that sought to explain the origins of SN as anti-Solomonic (Delekat 1967; Würthwein 1974; Veijola 1975; Langlamet 1976a; 1976b). This line of scholarly inquiry works backward from 1 Kgs 1–2 and pertains almost exclusively to Solomon. I therefore discuss it more fully in my section on the text of 1 Kgs 1–2 in §6.2.2.

83. Thus I concur with McKenzie's conclusion: "Dtr seems to have had one or more sources for his account in 2:8–4:12; 21:1–14; 9; 13–20, but these can no longer be isolated. Dtr assembled his sources into an account of David's reign that illustrated Yahweh's fulfillment of his promise to David" (2000b, 135).

In table 6 I go through each unit of text in 1 Sam 16–1 Kgs 2. I exclude various units as inauthentic, and when possible I attribute these to the Deuteronomist (Dtr) or the Prophetic Record (PR). The remaining units of text I include in TDRR. A brief justification or qualification of my inclusion and exclusion of most units appears in the right column. I interact primarily with McCarter's commentaries on 1–2 Samuel; I disagree with many of his conclusions, but they remain the best comprehensive source for dealing with the many source-critical issues of these books. All of the remarks are preliminary.

Table 6. Remarks on the Text of the David Narrative in 1 Sam 16–1 Kgs 2

Passage	TDRR	Alt. Source	Additional Remarks
1 Sam 16:1–13		PR	With McCarter (1980a, 278; 1980b, 492) and several who follow him, I attribute this passage to the later Prophetic Record.
1 Sam 16:14–23	I		<i>Contra</i> McCarter, I do not consider 1 Sam 16:14–23 the beginning of a separate, independent source, but the continuation of a Saul-David narrative. The opening of this passage has the character not of an incipit, but of a new chapter in an already-begun story.
1 Sam 17:1–11, 32–40, 42–48a, 49, 51–54		??	MT preserves a conflate text of the story of David and Goliath, but the OG (Codex Vaticanus) includes only one of the two narrative strands. Consequently, most scholars treat the OG as the original version of the story into which an alternative version was interwoven after the divergence of the <i>Vorlagen</i> of MT and LXX (McCarter 1980a, 306–7). But even the older story, common to MT and OG, bears the hallmarks of significant editing. Following McCarter, I treat the OG story of David and Goliath as an older account overlaid with a “highly idealized and symbolic” veneer (McCarter 1980a, 298). This veneer is so thoroughgoing and suggestive of an attitude far different from the apologetic propaganda common to other David traditions that it is impossible to extricate an underlying (historiographical?) narrative.

Passage	TDRR	Alt. Source	Additional Remarks
1 Sam 17:12–31, 41, 48b, 50, 55–58		??	The MT pluses clearly represent an alternative tradition that developed alongside (or after) the OG version. It is exceedingly difficult to accept the position of Van Seters and others who argue that the Hebrew <i>Vorlage</i> of LXX presents an abridgement of an originally unified 17:1–54 (cf. Van Seters 2009, 135–57). ^a
1 Sam 18:1–5, 10–11, 17–19, 29b–30		??	The OG continues its omission of several parts of 1 Sam 18, suggesting their affiliation with the later Goliath narrative. All of these passages are also doublets of other Davidic material, or at least can be construed that way, though that alone means little since, as outlined above, I hold that at least two older David traditions existed side by side.
1 Sam 18:6–9*, 12–16*	II		This passage presupposes 1 Sam 17 in some form. As mentioned above in the defense of my exclusion of the OG version of David and Goliath, I do expect that a story of David defeating a Philistine champion underlies the earlier of the two preserved accounts, but it cannot be divorced from the secondary overlay.
1 Sam 18:20–27*	III		
1 Sam 18:28–29a; 19:1–10	IV		For the justification of including 18:28–29a with this section, which involves reading “all Israel” for “Michal” in 18:28 with the Codex Vaticanus, see McCarter 1980a, 320–23.
1 Sam 19:11–17	V		

a. So far as I can tell, Van Seters seems to argue for the unity of 17:1–54 largely on the grounds that it is not as inconsistent as many claim it to be, yet he argues that the abridgement was an attempt at harmonization to remove perceived inconsistencies.

Passage	TDRR	Alt. Source	Additional Remarks
1 Sam 19:18–20:1a		??	This passage presents various difficulties: It contradicts the notice in 1 Sam 15:35 that Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death, it makes no geographical sense (Van Seters 2009, 171), and it is a doublet of 1 Sam 10:9–13. It bears some affinities with the Prophetic Record (the only other interaction of David and Samuel appears in 1 Sam 16:1–13), but note McCarter's caution against including it with this source (1980a, 330). Its origin remains a mystery, but the presence of Samuel and other inconcinnities recommend it as a late addition to the David complex.
1 Sam 20:1b–10, 18–22, 24–39; 21:1[20:42b]	VI		
1 Sam 20:11–17, 23, 40–42[42a]; 23:16–18; 24:21–23a[20–22a]; 2 Sam 3:9–10, 18b; 21:7		Dtr??	These verses seem to be part of a secondary insertion (cf. McCarter 1980a, 344). The first section (1 Sam 20:11–17) intrudes upon the narrative; v. 18 should follow v. 10 directly. The final section of ch. 20 provides a particularly confusing problem in that it renders the entire preceding passage nonsensical and therefore suggests a conflation rather than an expansion. The next two sections continue the same theme, once more through Jonathan (1 Sam 23:16–18) and once through Saul himself (1 Sam 24:21–23a[20–22a]). The next minor interpolation (2 Sam 3:9–10, 18b) may derive from a different context, but continues the same general theme of Yahweh's promise to transfer the kingship to David, now through the mouth of Abner. Finally, I include here 2 Sam 21:7, which provides a continuation to David's covenant with Jonathan in 1 Sam 20:11–17.

Passage	TDRR	Alt. Source	Additional Remarks
1 Sam 20:42b[21:1]–21:10[9]; 22:6–23	VII		I include this complex in TDRR with some hesitation, as some factors point to it being a later insertion. The presence of a posse of some sort accompanying David in 21:3–6[2–5] is out of place at this point in the narrative; it would not make sense until at least after 1 Sam 22:1–2. Moreover, the role of Doeg the Edomite suggests a later context, which is further supported by the blatant polemic in 22:18–19. Finally, the presence of Abiathar in 22:20–23 could point to a Deuteronomistic stratum, though Abiathar's presence elsewhere in TDRR seems original. Abiathar's exile to Anathoth strongly suggests a connection between the Abiatharide line and the Deuteronomistic History (cf. McBride 2009, 187–89; <i>contra</i> Van Seters 2009, 200 n. 32).
1 Sam 21:11–16[10–15]	VIII		This passage is not easily reconcilable with David's later exploits as a mercenary under the auspices of Achish (1 Sam 27:1–28:2). Most scholars, correctly in my view, therefore treat the two passages as a doublet providing alternative explanations of David's connections to the king of Gath. McCarter takes no stance in the debate between whether this constituted a “late, midrashic reinterpretation of 27:1ff” or “had some early traditional life of its own” (1980a, 358–59). In light of my view that two early, parallel Davidic traditions arose, the latter option seems more likely to me. I submit that the earliest traditions provided two starkly different accounts of David's Philistine connection. One, involving the complex of 1 Sam 17* and episodes II, III, and VIII here, asserted that David was an enemy of the Philistines from his youth and could not possibly have had an amicable relationship with Achish of Gath. The other, which cannot be detected prior to episode XV below, acknowledged his erstwhile fealty to Achish but asserted that he remained loyal to Judah and Israel during this period as a double agent of sorts. The fact that both traditions repeat the anthem of 1 Sam 18:7 confuses the picture somewhat, though.
1 Sam 22:1–2	IX		

Passage	TDRR	Alt. Source	Additional Remarks
1 Sam 22:3–5		??	This brief passage (or passages, if 22:5 should be separated from 22:3–4) presumably derives from a later tradition, the same that furnished David's genealogy through a Moabitess great-grandmother, Ruth (Ruth 4:17–22; 1 Chr 2:11–15). David's only other interaction with Moab suggests less-than-cordial relations between the two, to say the least (2 Sam 8:2), relegating the episode here to secondary status. ^b
1 Sam 23:1–5, 6–13	X		As many commentators have acknowledged, the Keilah episode contains at least two layers. The first, 23:1–5, was expanded by a later hand that provided 23:6–13. Here, too, we note certain incongruities. In 23:2–4 David inquires of Yahweh without the mediation of a priest, but the expansion treats a priest (and ephod) as prerequisite to divination (23:6, 9–12). This might lead one to connect 23:6–13 with the preceding Nob pericope (episode VII), but this creates another problem. Although 22:20–23 leaves Abiathar in David's party, in 23:6 Abiathar flees to David at Keilah. No simple solution presents itself; suffice it to say that 23:1–5 doubtless derives from an early Davidic tradition (note that it could follow 22:1–2 smoothly, more smoothly than it follows 22:6–23 in its current position), but the origin of 23:6–13 is more questionable. For an excellent analysis of the Keilah passage (and the following Ziph passages), see Wright 2014, 51–65.

b. “Mizpeh of Moab” (22:3; 22:5 Syriac), mentioned nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible, would not immediately call to mind the Mizpeh located in Judah, except for two features of this text. As stated above, 22:3–5 likely derives from a late, possibly exilic, hand. The mention of Gad in 23:5 suggests a party with an interest in prophets. These two features jump out at the reader in light of the fact that the material about Judahite (or more properly, Judean) Mizpeh in 1 Samuel derives from “an exilic revision [of DtrH] from a prophetic perspective” (McCarter 1994, 280). Such a connection between the two Mizpehs could be coincidence, however.

Passage	TDRR	Alt. Source	Additional Remarks
1 Sam 23:14–15, 19–24:1[23:29]	XI		This episode presents innumerable source-critical difficulties. To begin with, these verses appear to conflate two accounts, one taking place in the Wilderness of Ziph and another in the Wilderness of Ma'ón. Two pairs of verses repeat themselves, suggesting mini-doublets within the narrative (23:14//23:15; 23:24//23:25). The description in Ziph parallels the location of David's second sparing of Saul, in ch. 26, and one verse here parallels a verse there almost verbatim (23:19//26:21). The entire incident has an etiological function (23:28), indicating that at least one textual stratum derived from a later hand. It could be that, like the Keilah account in episode X, this story involves an earlier and a later stratum. I therefore include it with hesitation.
1 Sam 24:2–20[1–19], 23b[22b]	XII		Here we have half of perhaps the most conspicuous doublet in the entire David complex, two remarkably similar episodes in which he spares the life of his rival and king, Saul (cf. 26:1–25, episode XIV). McCarter considers this account a “tendentious retelling” (1980b, 493) of episode XIV, in which subtle themes are made more explicit and David's piety is magnified. The only verses here that demand a later milieu, however, are 21–23a[20–22a], which I attribute to the same hand that inserted the similarly themed Jonathan passages (20:11–17, 23, 40–42[42a]; 23:16–18). I thus retain the bulk of this passage as an early alternative tradition to episode XIV, albeit tentatively. Practically, this ends up close to McCarter's position. He treats this passage like the OG version of 1 Sam 17, which incorporates traditional material while recasting it in a highly polemical fashion (cf. McCarter 1980a, 385–87).
1 Sam 25:1a		PR	This half verse, like the other passages concerning Samuel in the David complex (except perhaps the end of 1 Sam 19), derives from the Prophetic Record.

Passage	TDRR	Alt. Source	Additional Remarks
1 Sam 25:1b–27, 32–44	XIII		Yet again, assorted inconcinnities in the <i>textus receptus</i> indicate that some sort of corruption or conflation has occurred here. First, 25:28–31 come from a secondary, Deuteronomistically oriented hand (see below). Second, some of the verses surrounding this expansion are out of place; 25:26 demands that Nabal has already expired, and 25:33 also works better in a post-Nabal world. McCarter moves v. 26 to follow v. 41 because that is the only place where Abigail speaks to David after Nabal's demise (1980a, 394), but it requires an abrupt change of context there and does not work well, and it does not account for v. 33. A third textual issue is the presence of further doublets, specifically the two accounts of David's violent intentions against Nabal (25:12–17, 21) and David's two blessing speeches (25:32–34, 39). With no persuasive solution, I leave the text as is while recognizing that it has undergone some revision during its lifetime.
1 Sam 25:28–31		Dtr	As McCarter (1980a, 401–2; 1980b, 493) and others have pointed out, Abigail's words here adumbrate the Deuteronomistic dynastic promise to David in 2 Sam 7, and as such seem secondary. While there is no obvious text-critical basis for treating these verses as an interpolation, the fact that they follow two verses that appear to be out of place (see the above comment concerning episode XIII) indicates that this passage garnered the attention of a later editor.
1 Sam 26:1–25	XIV		
1 Sam 27:1–12	XV		In addition to the obvious issue arising here from this pericope's irreconcilability with its doublet in 21:11–16[10–15], the current arrangement of episodes in TDRR presents a minor incongruity. The preceding episode XIV concludes with a restored peace between David and Saul and the latter's assurance that he will no longer seek out David, but this episode commences with David fleeing from Saul to save his life. Also, the etiological "to this day" statement in 27:6 may suggest a later hand.

Passage	TDRR	Alt. Source	Additional Remarks
1 Sam 28:1–2; 29:1–11	XVI		The opening verses of this episode (28:1–2) are more traditionally appended to 27:1–12, but they seem much more connected to 29:1–11, to which they form an introduction.
1 Sam 28:3–25		PR	Samuel's presence again alerts us to an interpolation from the Prophetic Record. McCarter posits that the prophetic editor revised a preexisting account and attempts to separate the strata (1980a, 423); his analysis is feasible but I consider the overlay too thoroughly infused into the current form of the account to allow for a confident extrication of the original. This passage is also out of sequence; the location of the Philistine armies in 28:4 indicates that it should be read after chs. 29–30, when the Philistines arrive at Jezreel (cf. McCarter 1980a, 422).
1 Sam 30:1–31	XVII		
1 Sam 31:1–13	XVIII		
2 Sam 1:1–16	XIX		Scholars have long debated the relationship of this episode to the preceding account of Saul's death (episode XVIII). Many assume that the two passages faithfully present alternative traditions (a doublet) while many others see no irreconcilable conflict between the two. The main issue involves how Saul died; in 1 Sam 31 the narrator reports that he committed suicide, but in 2 Sam 1 an Amalekite reports to David that he himself took Saul's life. McCarter, adopting the view that the two passages do not contradict one another, points out that "all these problems evaporate if we assume that the Amalekite is lying. ... In the expectation that it would lend further support to his scheme, he decided to represent himself as the slayer of Saul, but in this respect he, like the men who subsequently would assassinate Ishbaal fatally misjudged David" (1984, 63). Such an explanation is plausible, but given the number of other doublets running throughout TDRR I find it more likely that the two episodes developed independently. Nothing in the narration of 2 Sam 1 suggests that the Amalekite is lying. Moreover, if he indeed fabricates his murder of Saul in order to ingratiate himself with David, he

Passage	TDRR	Alt. Source	Additional Remarks
			does a poor job of it since he presents himself as doing a service to the already mortally wounded Saul by putting him out of his misery (1:9–10).
2 Sam 1:17–27	XX		
2 Sam 2:1–9, 10b	XXI		
2 Sam 2:10a, 11; 5:4–5		Dtr	The notice of David's and Ish-Baal's regnal lengths in 2 Sam 2 suggests a later, probably Deuteronomistic, insertion. The chronological notice in 2 Sam 5 doubtless derives from the Deuteronomist.
2 Sam 2:12–17	XXII		
2 Sam 2:18–32	XXIII		
2 Sam 3:1, 6–8, 11–18a, 19–39	XXIV		These verses may be a conflation of various traditions; note especially the tension between 3:13 and 3:14–16. It could be that the latter verses derive from the same tradition as 1 Sam 18:20–27* while 3:13 derives from a separate tradition (perhaps even a tradition that did not recognize a prior marriage of David and Michal). In any event, the dual demands for Michal, to Abner (3:13) and then to Ish-Baal (3:14), appear redundant.
2 Sam 3:2–5; 5:13–16		??	These lists of sons born to David at Hebron (3:2–5) and after Hebron (5:13–16) could derive from an early source and therefore merit inclusion in TDRR. They seem to be secondary interpolations, however, and in any event do not seriously affect this study.
2 Sam 4:1–12	XXV		I leave this unit intact, though the ectopic introduction of Merib-Baal in 4:4 seems extremely peculiar and perhaps should be relocated to 2 Sam 9 (cf. the discussion of McCarter 1984, 128).
2 Sam 5:1–3	XXVI		This brief notice is itself a doublet, combining two separate notices of David's installation as king over Israel (5:1–2, 3). McCarter interprets the first notice (vv. 1–2) as a Deuteronomistic expansion (1984, 133), but it may be original (alternatively, v. 2b might be an expansion of an earlier notice of vv. 1–2a).

Passage	TDRR	Alt. Source	Additional Remarks
2 Sam 5:6–10	XXVII		McCarter writes of 5:10, “The finality in this statement is unmistakable” (1984, 142). I, too, assume that this verse provides the conclusion to one of the original sources describing David’s rise.
2 Sam 5:11–12		Dtr	This passage is chronologically out of place and seems to be an interpolation of the Deuteronomist.
2 Sam 5:17–21, 22–25	XXVIII		This report of David’s defeat of the Philistines itself consists of two individual reports (5:17–21, 22–25; cf. McCarter 1984, 159). Their original relationship is difficult to determine.
2 Sam 6:1–13, 17–19	XXIX		It is difficult to identify affinities between this episode and others in TDRR. It is often considered the conclusion of the Ark Narrative that appears in 1 Sam 4:1–7:1, but see McCarter’s arguments against this (1984, 182–83). McCarter, on the basis of Mesopotamian works about the procession of deities which he adduces as parallels, considers this an authentic early tradition of Davidic date (1984, 180–84). This is likely the case, though one’s view of the date of this composition may depend on one’s interpretation of when the ark traditions commanded greatest interest.
2 Sam 6:14–16*, 20–23	XXX		These verses should be regarded as a separate unit that was later interwoven with the surrounding story of the entrance of the ark to Jerusalem (episode XXIX). A minor issue arises in that 6:15 seems better connected with the ark transfer than the Michal episode, but since it is largely repeated by 6:17, one should not attribute both verses to the ark report. I thus assume that 6:15 is redactional.
2 Sam 7:1–29		Dtr	This chapter is perhaps the most studied in 2 Samuel since Nathan’s oracle provides one of the programmatic Deuteronomistic speeches. Nearly all scholars see multiple strata within the chapter as it now stands, though there is little consensus on how exactly to divide the strata. While I accept that later editors/authors may have built on an earlier dynastic promise, at this point the Deuteronomistic ideology is ubiquitous.

Passage	TDRR	Alt. Source	Additional Remarks
			For one of the best analyses of this chapter, and one whose methodology aligns well with that of this study, see the recent essay by Mettinger (2008). After isolating the earliest layer of 2 Sam 7, Mettinger investigates the rhetorical situation and locates it in the crisis of Solomon's succession. In this light, it would be interesting to study this text alongside the Succession Narrative, for which see the following chapter.
2 Sam 8:1–14	XXXI		This episode includes four separate war reports, those against the Philistines (8:1), Moabites (8:2), Arameans (8:3–13a), and Edomites (8:13b–14; for the textual problems in 8:13 see McCarter 1984, 246). I follow McCarter in considering this passage “a Deuteronomistic compilation of ancient fragments organized about the theme of victory” (1984, 251). Some scholars now consider these wars to be a later invention of the Deuteronomist (Van Seters 2009, 230–33), citing recent archaeological findings that suggest that tenth-century Palestine lacked the trappings of statehood, let alone empire. I suggest that 2 Sam 8 can and should be read more modestly than the early historical critics tended to read it, however; for example, see the picture painted in McKenzie 2000a, 147–49. Halpern, too, despite employing questionable methodology at times, concludes at the end of his lengthy study of 2 Sam 8, “This reading of Samuel, then, may imply a drastic reduction in traditional views of the early empire” (2001, 226).
2 Sam 8:15–18; 20:23–26		??	Like the lists of David's sons in 2 Sam 3:2–5; 5:13–16, these lists of David's officers may derive from early documents (Mettinger 1971, 7) and therefore merit inclusion in TDRR. But, also like the son lists, these are interpolations here and do not much affect this study, so I exclude them from analysis.

Passage	TDRR	Alt. Source	Additional Remarks
2 Sam 9:1–13	XXXII		This episode is the nexus of passages pertaining to the fate of the Saulide line, and as such presents a plethora of vexing problems. The underlying issue is that of the identity of Merib-Baal, which we will examine briefly here. The episode here most closely ties into David's later interactions with Ziba and Merib-Baal (2 Sam 16:1–4; 19:25–31[24–30]), but disagrees with the later passages by introducing Merib-Baal as the son of Jonathan, not Saul (contrast 2 Sam 9:3, 6–7 with 2 Sam 16:3; 19:25[24]). Veijola's solution is to extricate all references to Jonathan from ch. 9, but such an approach mangles the text by demanding a later revision affecting 9:1, 3*, 6*, 7a*, 7b, 10ab, 11b, 13 (1978, 360; it is ironic that Veijola presents this solution after characterizing Schulte's as too "gezwungen"; 1978, 344). The episode of the extermination of the Saulides in 2 Sam 21:1–14 (episode XLV) only adds to the confusion by labeling Merib-Baal the son of Jonathan in 21:7 but the son of Saul in the following verse. Added to all this is that Codex Vaticanus and 4QSam^a both consistently read the name Merib-Baal (= Mephibosheth) in place of Ish-Baal in 2 Sam 3–4. One should also note the introduction of Merib-Baal in the <i>textus receptus</i> in 2 Sam 4:4, a verse that seems completely disconnected to the surrounding narrative and appears not to be in the correct location. McCarter provides a fairly tortuous explanation (although no solution to this problem could be anything but tortuous) wherein a son of Saul, Mippi-Baal, and a son of Jonathan, Merib-Baal, were confused at various stages in various traditions (1984, 124–25). I will not attempt my own explanation here; for the purposes of this study I am content to allow that confusion crept into the traditions at some point, but the historiographical tradition that David brought a scion of Saul named Merib-Baal (or something similar) into his household is genuine.

Passage	TDRR	Alt. Source	Additional Remarks
2 Sam 10:1–11:1; 12:26–31	XXXIII		This independent text was presumably specially chosen by the author of 2 Sam 11:2–12:25 as an appropriate framework for the latter episode, which led to this episode's inclusion here (McCarter notes certain chronological difficulties that suggest that the war reported here occurred after, not before, Absalom's rebellion; 1984, 273–75). But even if 2 Sam 10–12 was inserted at a later point into the tradition as a unit, that has no bearing on the analysis of this episode (cf. McCarter 1984, 275–76; Hutton 2009, 189–92). Like the reports in 2 Sam 8, I consider the report(s) in this episode to reflect an actual victory; there is no basis for doubting the basic historicity of the narrative unless one has previously excluded the possibility that an historical David could have engaged in such conflicts.
2 Sam 11:2–12:25		PR	As discussed above, I attribute this entire pericope to the Prophetic Record; in the entire David complex, only here do king and prophet interact in such a way. McCarter leaves open the possibility that the tradition here “may ultimately derive from circles contemporary with and hostile to David” (1984, 291), but if this is the case it is impossible to discern the nature of the tradition with which he worked.
2 Sam 13:1–22	XXXIV		I consider this and the following two episodes to be part of one greater unit (2 Sam 13–14), which as a whole constitutes a prologue to the story of Absalom's rebellion. While I am persuaded that 2 Sam 13–14 reflects a single unit as opposed to a compilation of independent sources, I remain agnostic regarding its unity with the following material in 2 Sam 15:1–20:22. Despite 2 Sam 15:1–12, which deals exclusively with Absalom, the latter pericope is oriented toward David, not Absalom, but 2 Sam 13–14 is definitely an Absalom narrative. Although the account of the Absalom revolt works better when prefaced by 2 Sam 13–14, it is not absolutely necessary. The introduction of Absalom as “the son of David” in 13:1 when elsewhere in the account he is simply Absalom (including 2 Sam 15:1) supports an original unity of 2 Sam 13–14 to the following, but it alone is insufficient to prove the connection.

Passage	TDRR	Alt. Source	Additional Remarks
2 Sam 13:23–39	XXXV		
2 Sam 14:1–33	XXXVI		Although I attribute this text to an early tradition, I recognize that there are many aspects of 2 Sam 14 that raise questions about its origin and development. Among this chapter’s peculiarities: the character of Joab seems different here than in the rest of the biblical presentation—his recognition of David’s plight reflects a sensitivity at odds with his portrayal as overly “harsh” (קשה, cf. 2 Sam 3:39) elsewhere, he responds without hostility to Absalom’s provocation, and this is essentially the only place where he appears in a nonmilitary context; the woman’s analogy to David presumes that Absalom is his only remaining heir (and loses much of its force given David’s many other sons); the description of Absalom in 14:25–27 lacks context and the mention of his daughter Tamar suggests a confusion of traditions (several commentators have questioned whether this passage is a secondary interpolation, which may well be the case); and lastly, David’s name is never mentioned in the text as he is referred to as only “the king” throughout.
2 Sam 15:1–12	XXXVII		I treat 2 Sam 15:1–20:22 as an originally unified composition, though with some hesitation. Hutton, following a group of “Continental commentators” (Hutton 2009, 203 and <i>passim</i>), presents a strong case for distinguishing a Transjordanian flight stratum consisting of 2 Sam 15:7–17:29* and 19:9b–20:13* from an original report of the war consisting of 2 Sam 18:1–19:9a* (2009, 201–11; he also connects 15:1–6, 13 to the earliest kernel, and he does not separately treat 20:14–26).
2 Sam 15:13–16:14; 17:24–29	XXXVIII		

Passage	TDRR	Alt. Source	Additional Remarks
2 Sam 16:15–17:23*	XXXIX		Like so many others in 1–2 Samuel, this episode exhibits one aberration that defies explanation. After Hushai successfully persuades Absalom against the perspicacious counsel of Ahithophel, he sends a message to David instructing him to react as if Ahithophel's counsel were followed. This makes no narratological sense. One wonders if the <i>textus receptus</i> presents a conflation of two traditions; in one Hushai serves David by persuading Absalom against Ahithophel's counsel and leading him into a disaster, while in the other Hushai serves David simply as an informant, letting him know what Ahithophel will do. This can perhaps be seen in the depiction of Ahithophel as a sage, almost a divinely inspired seer, in some parts of the text (cf. 16:23), but a military leader in others (cf. 17:1–4). If this hypothesis is correct, it would appear that David's initial request of Hushai demonstrates a well-crafted doublet (15:34//15:35–36).
2 Sam 18:1–8	XL		
2 Sam 18:9–19:9a[8a]	XLI		
2 Sam 19:9b[8b]–20:3	XLII		
2 Sam 20:4–13	XLIII		
2 Sam 20:14–22	XLIV		
2 Sam 21:1–6, 8–14	XLV		The final four chapters of 2 Samuel are often designated an “appendix” because they stand apart from the general narrative progress of 1–2 Samuel that describes the careers of Samuel, Saul, and David. Instead, these chapters provide an assortment of six originally independent texts apparently included here because they all involve David. Although there are no obvious interconnections among the stories, they seem to be presented in an overarching chiasmic pattern with two poems in the center (2 Sam 22:1–51 and 23:1–7), two lists outside that (2 Sam 23:15–22 and 23:8–39), and two narratives forming the bookends (2 Sam 21:1–14 and 24:1–25). For more on this, see McCarter 1984, 18–19.

Passage	TDRR	Alt. Source	Additional Remarks
			Like most commentators, I consider the mention of Merib-Baal son of Jonathan in the middle of this episode (2 Sam 21:7) to be redactional. The reference to the “oath” (שבועה) between David and Jonathan here suggests that this derives from the same literary horizon as 1 Sam 20:11–17, where Jonathan “caused [David] to swear an oath” (להשביע, 1 Sam 20:17). This does not solve all the problematic aspects of this passage, however. With 21:7 excised, this episode narrates the execution of a Saulide named Merib-Baal (21:8), which conflicts with the other accounts that Merib-Baal remained in David’s household (2 Sam 9:1–13; the positive relationship between David and Merib-Baal is also presupposed in 2 Sam 19:25–31[24–30]). Part of the problem would be solved if one posits two men by this name, one the son of Saul and one the son of Jonathan (cf. McCarter 1984, 125). But if so one must still posit a conflation of the two in 2 Sam 16:3; 19:25[24], where the son of Saul—executed, according to this episode—receives the characteristics of the son of Jonathan.
2 Sam 21:15–22	XLVI		The notice of four of David’s servants who slew four Philistine heroes has received attention primarily because of the mention of “Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver’s beam” (21:19) being slain not by David, but Elhanan. This produces a stark contrast with the famous narrative of 1 Sam 17. McCarter suggests that the name and trappings of Goliath were transported from the brief Elhanan notice to David’s originally anonymous Philistine adversary at a late stage of development of 1 Sam 17 (1980a, 291, 298).
2 Sam 22:1–51		??	This passage, which reappears elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible as Ps 18, apparently combines two poems (22:2–20 and 22:29–50*), both of early origin (McCarter 1984, 475). The attribution to David, however, is likely a late addition, and the generalities of this psalm of deliverance do not suggest, let alone demand, any particular historical context.

Passage	TDRR	Alt. Source	Additional Remarks
2 Sam 23:1–7		??	Like the psalm of 2 Sam 22, this poem was probably attributed to David at a later stage in the development of the text. There is nothing to prohibit its composition in the era of David, but its literary genre recommends it as a later composition. For an interesting study of this passage, see Mettinger 1977.
2 Sam 23:8–39*	XLVII		McCarter notes that the constellation of the warriors' hometowns in Judah and the region directly north of Judah (Benjamin, Dan, and Ephraim) recommends this list, or at least vv. 24–35, as a document from early in David's reign, not a later artificial construction (1984, 500–501). The list undoubtedly underwent supplementation at later stages, most saliently with the addition of Uriah the Hittite at the conclusion.
2 Sam 24:1–25		PR/Dtr	This passage bears many marks of redaction, and various complicated models of its textual history have been proposed. As is, the pericope bears marks of the Prophetic Record (particularly the active role of Gad) and the Deuteronomist. McCarter identifies an original stratum of 24:1–9, 15, 16b, 20–25, which he takes as contemporary with David and apologetic in tone (1984, 518). I think even this truncated passage bears some marks of a later date, such as the (Deuteronomistic?) mention of “from Dan to Beersheba” in 24:2 ^c and the etiology in 24:15–25. Thus, while this episode likely derives from an older narrative, it is impossible to extricate an underlying stratum from its current presentation.
1 Kgs 1–2		SN	Although the bulk of this text presumably dates from shortly after the death of David, it describes a phase of David's life beyond that with which this study is most concerned. I discuss these chapters in depth in my analysis of the Succession Narrative of Solomon, ch. 6.

c. The expression “from Dan to Beersheba” occurs two other times in the entire David complex—in 2 Sam 3:10, an interpolation of the Deuteronomist, and 2 Sam 17:11, part of the multilayered Ahithophel/Hushai duel, where it may also be part of a later interpolation.

5.3 APOLOGETIC ANALYSIS

In light of the circumstances of David's accession to the throne of Israel, it is not difficult to ascertain why this king commissioned and disseminated an apology. His public profile left something to be desired since his typical subject would likely have known little more than the following about the new object of their allegiance: he had an impressive military record, but he deserted Israel and led a band of fugitives in the wilderness who survived by raiding surrounding villages; he had a strong relationship with the Philistines and served in their army; he was estranged from Saul, who considered him a threat; he fought against Israel; and he became king only after a vacuum in leadership opened up due to the demise of Saul, Ish-Baal, Abner, and several others. David's ascent left a wake of corpses, many of whom were prominent, publicly known individuals. These men, furthermore, tended to die at times extremely convenient for David—the disparate untimely deaths supplied him with wealth and wives (Nabal), obviated potential conflicts (Abner, Amasa), provided security for his rule (Amnon?, Absalom, the Saulides), and most importantly, vacated the Israelite throne for his taking (Saul, Ish-Baal). One suspects that the typical Israelite—like many modern scholars (Halpern 2001; McKenzie 2000a; VanderKam 1980)—must have assumed that David's meteoric rise did not result entirely from happenstance.

In some ways, TDRR is the paradigmatic ancient Near Eastern apology. The apologist employs nearly every apologetic motif in his effort to legitimize David, including passivity, transcendent nonretaliation, the unworthy predecessor, military prowess, and the entire triad of establishing legitimacy. The number of equivocal incidents during David's rise and reign yields a list of charges against David longer than that evident in any other text in this study. The apologist also assists those trying to read against the grain by providing in the apology the accusation itself on at least three occasions, the last of which is particularly telling: "Thus said Shimei while he cursed, 'Come out, come out, bloodstained man, scoundrel! Yahweh has returned on you all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you reign, and Yahweh has given the kingdom into the hand of Absalom, your son. See your evil,⁸⁴ for you are a bloodstained man!'" (2 Sam 16:7–8).⁸⁵

But even with the body count, the dubious history in the wilderness, and the annihilation of his rival's descendants, perhaps the most objectionable aspect of David's rule to many of his subjects stemmed not from what he did, but from who he was. David had no pedigree to bestow upon him any royal legitimacy. More-

84. The text literally reads, "Behold, you are in your evil" (הִנֵּךְ בְּרַעְתֶּךָ). McCarter translates "You're in this evil predicament"; cf. his textual note on this verse (1984, 368).

85. The other two accusations that appear in TDRR are Nabal's declaration that David is a deserter (drawing comparisons to an *'apiru*; 1 Sam 25:11); and David's acknowledgment that the murderers of Saul and Ish-Baal all thought that they were doing a deed for which they would be rewarded (2 Sam 4:8–12).

over, given the intertribal⁸⁶ hostility between Israel and Judah apparent during David's reign, perceived kinship to the Judahites may have served as an impediment to his legitimacy in the eyes of Israel.⁸⁷ In addition to responding to accusations of various crimes, therefore, David had to explain to his subjects why he had any claim to the throne at all. The preoccupation with legitimization in this regard suffuses TDRR, so we will first look at that, then at the litany of individual charges to which David responded in his apology.

David had no right to the throne—David's legitimization. David goes to greater lengths to demonstrate his legitimacy than any other ruler in this study. Adopting the strategy of reading against the grain (see McKenzie 2000a, 45), then, we must assume that David's legitimacy was a major issue during his reign. The biblical narrative explicitly corroborates this at least twice, first when Shimei accuses him of bloodshed regarding "the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned" (בֵּית-שָׁאוֹל אֲשֶׁר מָלַכְתָּ תַּחְתּוֹ, 2 Sam 16:8, reading with the *kētib*), and secondly when Sheba exploits intertribal antagonism by rallying Israel with the cry, "We have no portion in David!" (אֵין-לָנוּ חֶלֶק בְּדָוִד, 2 Sam 20:1). David responds to this issue by

86. I use the compound word "intertribal" here deliberately since each part of the word is significant. "Tribal" implies the nature of Judahite and Israelite societies in the period of David's rise. Judah might best be classified as a tribe; Israel perhaps achieved some form of statehood under Saul but can still be described as a confederation of tribes, or amphictyony according to the jargon of much of the secondary literature. This leads to the "inter" aspect, which is more important. Although the final, edited form of 1–2 Samuel—and the Hebrew Bible generally—has an "all-Israel" perspective that treats Judah as a part of the greater confederation of tribes constituting Israel, there are several reasons to consider this a retrojection of the ideology of a later period. In the early tenth century BCE, Judah was a distinct entity from the members of Israel. Thus, if David were a Judahite, then he was *not* an Israelite.

It should be noted here that David ascended two thrones, that of Judah (2 Sam 2:4) and that of Israel (2 Sam 5:1–3), but most of the charges responded to in the apology derive from Israelite detractors.

87. David's kinship affiliations remain difficult to understand. When the Israelites make him king, they state, "We are your bone and your flesh" (2 Sam 5:1), which seems to contradict the impression given of his background elsewhere in the text. Note that McCarter attributes this passage to the Deuteronomist (1984, 131–32). But following Absalom's rebellion David says to the Judahites, "You are my brothers, my bone and my flesh" (2 Sam 19:13[12]) to demonstrate his connection with them in contrast to the Israelites. Further complicating matters is that David's family is traced to Bethlehem (1 Sam 16:18 and *passim*), which at least at one point early in David's career served as a Philistine outpost (2 Sam 23:14). His genealogy goes no further than Jesse in the earliest traditions, which is unhelpful. Halpern concludes that David was likely a foreigner (2001, 274–76); I discuss this below regarding David's Philistine connection. This likely goes too far, but nevertheless, the lack of emphasis on his genealogy and origins suggests that David could not appeal to his lineage to support his legitimacy.

employing every conceivable rhetorical strategy, including all three of the triad of strategies described in §2.1.

The apologist demonstrates David's legitimacy through the royal family in several ways. This preoccupation with the motif of royal affiliation likely stems from the situation, unique to this apology, that connecting David to Saul responded not only to David's status as nonroyal but also to his status as non-Israelite. The clearest of these is through David's marriage to Saul's daughter Michal. Although marriage into the royal family would not have put David at the head of the line of potential successors of Saul, it would have provided him with Israelite kinship and conferred upon him a status superior to commoners. The author emphasizes this through the words of David himself: "Do you consider it (an) insignificant (matter) to become the son-in-law of the king? I am a poor man, and insignificant" (1 Sam 18:23). The author also highlights the new status by repeating the verb "become son-in-law" (התחתן, *√h tnin hitpa'el*) five times in this short passage (1 Sam 18:21, 22, 23, 26, 27),⁸⁸ and in the latter four instances it is followed by "to/of the king" (במלך). David's inclusion in the royal family is compounded by the fact that he earns Michal's allegiance, as the author indicates with the notice that Michal "loved" (ותאהב, 1 Sam 18:20) David.⁸⁹ This allegiance becomes crucial in the second Michal episode (1 Sam 19:11–17), wherein she betrays her father by helping David escape when his life is in jeopardy from an enraged Saul. Later, the necessity of David's marriage to Michal to demonstrate his Israelite status becomes apparent when David demands the return of Michal as a precondition for accepting the Israelite throne (2 Sam 3:13; cf. McCarter 1984, 114). Elsewhere in the early sources, it is not Saul's daughter, but his son, Jonathan, who abandons his father and sovereign and cleaves to David.⁹⁰ Jonathan "delighted in David greatly" (חפץ בדיד מאד, 1 Sam 19:1) and similarly helped David escape intended murder, drawing his father's wrath. Although much of the Jonathan tradition derives from a later author,⁹¹ already in TDRR Jonathan elects loyalty to David over his father, even at the expense of his own future rule (cf. 1 Sam 20:30–33). Through David's

88. McCarter excludes the first instance (1 Sam 18:21b) as redactional (1980a, 316), but it may be that only the perplexing "a second time?" (בשתיים; note that this is rendered in the Greek by the even more perplexing *εν ταις δυναμεσιν*, lit. "with powers") is secondary. The mention of the son-in-law in 18:21 aligns better with 18:20–27 than 18:17–19 in that it uses the verb התחתן while the later Merab passage expresses this with the verb "to be" plus the noun "son-in-law" (אהיה חתן, 18:18).

89. Cf. p. 164 n. 9. In MT this is repeated in 1 Sam 18:28, but "Michal" seems to be a corruption of an original "all Israel" (McCarter 1980a, 320–23).

90. It seems that Michal and Jonathan serve the same rhetorical function in two distinct streams of tradition about David; see §5.2.2.

91. This includes the three mentions of Jonathan's "love" (*√'hb*) for David in 1 Sam 18:1, 3 and 20:17, and the tradition of the covenant between David and Jonathan in 1 Sam 20:11–17, 40–42[42a] and 23:16–18. See §5.2.2.

relationships with Saul's daughter and son he himself becomes an ersatz son of Saul, a fact that Saul acknowledges when he calls David "my son" at the hill of Hachilah in episode XIV (1 Sam 26:17, 21).⁹² Although the apologist never explicitly appeals to David's inclusion in the royal family when legitimizing his throne, the rhetoric that Saul's household was loyal to David and considered him the better of the two men must have held currency with the original audiences.

But Jonathan and Michal were not the only people to turn to David. In another significant rhetorical move, David's apologist tells that the subjects of both members of the united monarchy approached him to rule them. First the Judahites (2 Sam 2:4) anoint David king, then the Israelites (2 Sam 5:1–3). One should not underestimate the significance of this point, as it combines three of the strategies of legitimation discussed in §2.1. First, by treating the Judahites and Israelites as the initiators of David's two kingships, the apologist removes from David any scheming or duplicity for the sake of his own ambition. This is part of the motif of passivity, which attempted to address the perception of David as a Machiavellian figure determined to establish his authority at any cost. On the contrary, the apologist asserts, David simply acquiesced to the wishes of his future subjects, who saw in him the courageous and effective leader that they needed. Related to this is the motif of David's military success, which caused his popularity (cf. 1 Sam 18:6–7, 13–16; 2 Sam 5:2; 19:10[9]). In Israel, as elsewhere in the ancient Near East, victory in battle was tied directly to divine favor and in turn bestowed legitimacy upon the leader.⁹³

The third motif apparent from the Judahites and Israelites approaching David for kingship is the first third of the major triad of legitimacy: popular acclamation. A common means of justifying usurpation in the ancient Near East was to appeal to the vox populi, so the apologist's inclusion of this here comes as no surprise.

The second member of the triad of legitimacy, royal prerogative, also appears in TDRR, if only weakly. In both of the parallel traditions of 1 Sam 24* and 26, Saul blesses David for his magnanimous mercy toward him. In one, Saul states, "May Yahweh repay you with good on account of what you have done to me today" (1 Sam 24:20[19]).⁹⁴ In the other, the benediction includes the adoptive language already seen: "Blessed are you, my son David" (1 Sam 26:25).

92. Saul also refers to David as "my son" in 1 Sam 24:17[16], which I include in TDRR, though tentatively. The most explicit acknowledgment of David's future sovereignty from Saul's mouth (1 Sam 24:21–23a[20–22a]), which occurs just a few verses later, most likely derives from the Deuteronomist or another later hand. See §5.2.2.

93. It is no accident that so many usurpers throughout history were military leaders (including Zimri and Omri of Samaria in the biblical record; one could perhaps even include Abner in this category). Such a position provides both the practical means of seizing power (an army) and the rhetorical foundation for legitimation (victory proves legitimacy).

94. I consider 1 Sam 24:21–23a[20–22a] a later, Deuteronomistic insertion. If I am wrong here and the tradition of the covenant between Saul's and David's houses is of Davidic date,

But by far the most heavily invoked member of the triad of legitimacy, and indeed the apologist's most important means of legitimizing David, is the motif of divine election:

The relevant assertion about David, which recurs throughout the composition, is "Yahweh was with him." It occurs first in 1 Sam 16:18 on the lips of one of Saul's attendants, striking the theological keynote of the drama even before David has actually set foot on stage. It is recapitulated in 1 Sam 18:14 (cf. MT's expansion in v 12b), where its implications are made explicit: "David was successful in all his undertakings, for Yahweh was with him." We are told also that it was in bitter realization of these implications that Saul finally resolved to take David's life (1 Sam 18:28–19:1a). This expression, as we have already seen, is the theological leitmotif of the apology of David, and the decisive influence of Yahweh's special favor for David runs throughout the narrative, the end of which is marked by a final repetition of the expression in connection with a glance ahead: "And David continued to grow greater and greater, for Yahweh Sabaoth was with him" [2 Sam 5:10]. (McCarter 1980b, 503–4)

It is, in fact, Yahweh's favor for David that makes sense of all the other apologetic elements in TDRR: it is why Saul's family shows David loyalty, why the people readily accept him as their king, and why all obstacles between David and the kingship mysteriously disappear. It is to these obstacles that the specific accusations against David pertain, so we will examine them now.⁹⁵

David was an outlaw and a bandit. Accusations of outlawry doubtless dogged David. After leaving the court of Saul with the aid of one or two of Saul's children, David spent a period of time as a fugitive in the wilderness (encompassing episodes IX–XV and perhaps VII–VIII). During this stage he first developed a loyal following: "And every person who was hard pressed, and every person who had a creditor, and every discontented person was gathered to him, and he became captain over them. There were with him about 400 people" (1 Sam 22:2). This pas-

the motif of royal prerogative is much stronger, because Saul continues by saying, "Now I know that you will indeed be king, and that the kingdom of Israel will come into your hand" (1 Sam 24:21[20]).

95. In the contribution of the Prophetic Record to the biblical account of David, his legitimacy is further bolstered by his anointment by the prophet Samuel (1 Sam 16:1–13). The prophetic backing is, of course, simply a further manifestation of his divine election, but it does add one element to it. Although David is generally pious and humble in the earliest traditions, the apologist does not explicitly tie these virtues to his divine election. This connection does appear in the Prophetic Record (cf. 1 Sam 16:7), however, as well as in the Deuteronomistic redactions.

sage has often been compared to a section of the Autobiography of Idrimi, ruler of Alalah ca. 1500 BCE. Having been ejected from his home, Idrimi retreated to the land of Canaan, where he encountered several other refugees: "(When) they saw that I was their lord's son, they gathered around me. 'I have become chief; I have been appointed'" (COS 1.148:479). Idrimi refers to these people as ¹⁶SA.GAZ (Akkadian *ḫ alḫpirū* = *'apirū*), a status of disenfranchised persons who lived outside the bounds of governmental authority as soldiers of fortune. Idrimi declares that with these newfound warriors he returned home and took the kingship of Alalah. But while the *'apirū* gravitated to one another, they represented a threat to landed citizens and were not looked upon with approbation (cf. Mendenhall 1973, 122–35; McCarter 1986a, 121–22). They subsisted on what they could wrest from others, often resorting to raiding for plunder. Surely many harbored suspicions that David's actions as a lord of brigands were not always honorable.

This is one of the rare cases where David's apologist employs transformative rhetoric—he does not deny David's status as a warlord; he instead embraces the charge but lauds David's noble deeds while working in this typically criminal vocation. To begin with, David became an outlaw in the first place not due to any debt or crime on his part, but only because of Saul's jealousy and unprovoked attempts on his life.⁹⁶ David became a victim of his own success. As an outlaw, David's irrepressible leadership qualities commanded the loyalty of a band of malcontents whom David transformed into a force for good. In the biblical narrative David appears as an ancient Robin Hood, a principled scofflaw who evades his pursuers and improves the lives of the common people—he shelters the priest Abiathar⁹⁷ after the slaughter of the priests of Nob (1 Sam 22:20–23) and saves the city Keilah (1 Sam 23:1–5).⁹⁸ The government of the land having been corrupted, David answers to a higher authority, taking his cues from Yahweh (1 Sam 23:2, 4, 11–12) while Saul, abandoned by God, can rely only on human intelligence (1 Sam 23:19–23; 24:2[1]; 26:1). Yahweh prevents David from having to sully himself with any illicit deeds, a theme that runs throughout the text and can be seen particularly clearly in the response to the next accusation.

David murdered Nabal and plundered his estate. This charge concerns one particular incident (episode XIII) that occurred during David's time as an outlaw leader. The circumstantial evidence is overwhelming here: Nabal, a man with extensive holdings in an isolated area, died mysteriously, and his wife and wealth turned up in the possession of David. Such brigandage appeared to con-

96. McCarter suggests that the emphasis on Saul's unjust pursuit of David was to counter accusations that David was disloyal to Saul and had deserted (1980b, 500; so also McKenzie 2000a, 32).

97. Thus, to continue the analogy, Abiathar is the ancient Near Eastern Friar Tuck.

98. Though coming from a different stage in his career, David's bestowal of gifts to the elders of Judah (1 Sam 30:26–31) continues this motif.

firm David's reputation as an *'apiru*-like figure (Mendenhall 1973, 132–35) and undermined any possible attempt he could make to claim legitimacy as king. But the apologist has an explanation. He begins with a smear campaign. He describes Nabal as “harsh and evil with respect to his deeds” (1 Sam 25:3) and disrespectful in his reply to David's men (1 Sam 25:10–11).⁹⁹ His servants call him “a scoundrel whom no one can speak to” (בן-בליעל מדבר אליו, 1 Sam 25:17). He later appears as a spendthrift (1 Sam 25:36). Even his name, Nabal (Hebrew נָבָל, *nābāl*), means “fool”¹⁰⁰ and may have been changed by the author to further illustrate his failings.¹⁰¹ Through these many character flaws he brings destruction upon himself; he is in no way a victim. As for the charges against David: Yes, David did send a contingent of warriors to lay claim to some of Nabal's provisions (1 Sam 25:4–8), but this was not extortion, as it seems, but a legitimate request after services rendered. Nabal's own men praise David for his protection of them in the wilderness and clearly think his request should have been honored (1 Sam 25:14–17). The apologist also admits that David became enraged to the point of vowing to annihilate all the men of Nabal's household (1 Sam 25:21–22), but he was prevented from doing so by the sagacious intercession of Nabal's wife, Abigail (1 Sam 25:18–19, 23–27, 32–35).¹⁰² David was not, however, in any way involved in Nabal's death.¹⁰³ David left him in peace, but then Yahweh smote him.¹⁰⁴ In this way the apologist reforms the

99. Nabal himself vocalizes the charge of outlawry against David, again drawing comparisons to *'apirū* of the Late Bronze Age. He states, “Nowadays there are many servants who break away each one from his master” (1 Sam 25:11). The audience of the apology knows better, however.

100. “Fool” is the customary translation, though Levenson points out that it “designates not a harmless simpleton, but rather a vicious, materialistic, and egocentric misfit” (1978, 13).

101. “The likelihood is that his real name has been changed for the purposes of characterization. The story-teller wants us to know what this fellow is like from the start” (Levenson 1978, 14). We have already seen other evidence of name changing in the books of Samuel (see p. 165 nn. 14, 16).

102. McKenzie goes a step further, accusing Abigail of mariticide: “She alone had direct access to Nabal. She also had motive; David offered her liberation from a bad marriage and the prospect of greater prosperity and status in the future.... Ruthless, or at least desperate, she was willing to conspire with David to murder her husband in order to forward his career and secure her own future” (2000a, 100–101). This is an intriguing proposition, though one that perhaps involves reading too much between the lines. It does, however, explain the apparently displaced v. 26 (see above in §5.2.2). In his wonderful fictional retelling of the David story—which accepts the apologetic character of the biblical narrative—Stefan Heym portrays Abigail sitting beside Nabal in his coma, waiting for him to die and refusing to let doctors treat him (1997, 70–76).

103. Thus David uses the (reformatory) rhetorical strategy of denial in response to the murder of Nabal, but the (transformative) strategy of differentiation in response to extortion—it was not extortion, actually, but a request to someone who owed him a favor.

104. One might say that Nabal died a natural death, but by supernatural means. Natural

most condemnatory part of this charge—premeditated murder for selfish gain—into further evidence of David's divine support. Yahweh favors David to the extent that David does not need to avenge himself; everything is taken care of for him. David himself expresses this: "Blessed be Yahweh, who judged the judgment of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and restrained his servant from evil. Yahweh returned the evil of Nabal on his own head" (1 Sam 25:39).

The episode with Nabal provides an interesting test case for how to interpret apologetic literature, so we will pause here to consider it before examining the next charge. Unlike several other passages that present thoroughly and undeniably flattering images of David, there seems to be some tension here. The first scene in particular portrays David dubiously at best when read carefully; if indeed the ancient audience heard the story with rumors of David the *'apiru* as background, it would have come off badly. David's men show up at Nabal's door and demand his belongings, and when he does not immediately acquiesce to this attempted extortion, David plans to wipe out his entire estate. Although Yahweh and Abigail end up saving David from committing murder, providing an apology for the core crime, David's behavior and motives are questionable. How do we explain this tension?

Discussing the Court History in relation to Solomon's apology, McCarter writes,

Apologetic writing presents unfavorable circumstances forthrightly in order to cast favorable light on them by a variety of literary means. By its very nature, then, it holds conflicting ideas in literary tension. The elimination of the literary blandishments of the author by appeal to higher critical or other considerations, therefore, will inevitably produce a recital of unfavorable circumstances, but it will also distort the writer's intended product beyond recovery. It is a mistake to rely heavily on the criterion of narrative tension for identifying redactional material in these stories, when such tension is the very essence of the writer's technique. (McCarter 1981, 358 n. 12)

He thus treats 1 Sam 25:2–44 as an independent unit, with the exception of the later Deuteronomistic interpolation of 25:28–31 (1980b, 493). Van Seters, on the other hand, treats the negative elements of this chapter as a parody of Deuteronomistic ideology and considers the whole to be a demonstration of how unfit David is for kingship (2009, 186–90).

Arguing against McCarter is the fact that parts of this episode are difficult to spin positively, particularly David's demand for protection money in 1 Sam 25:4–8 that many readers consider extortion. Moreover, as an exchange between David's

or supernatural, more important for David's apology is that Nabal did not die from human intervention.

men and another party (now deceased) in the wilderness, one is hard pressed to include this among “the things he did [that] were publicly known and could not be baldly denied” (McCarter 1984, 15). Thus it does seem that at least someone involved with the composition of this text desired to indict David. It must also be factored into this discussion that 1 Sam 25 shows not only signs of Deuteronomistic interpolation, but also signs of conflation of more than one original account (see §5.2.2). Thus one could make a strong case that the literary tension actually reflects a tension between different redactional strata or independent narrative strands.

Arguing for McCarter, however, is the fact that the comments of Nabal’s men in 25:14–17 seem to respond to the charge that David attempted to extort Nabal by saying that the request was honorable. If a later apologist sought to clear David’s name, it seems that he could have accomplished it more successfully than by leaving the original charge in place. Note that most other charges in the apologies under investigation must be inferred; they are assumed by the authors but not explicitly mentioned. If one does attempt to explain the tension away in terms of multiple authors, Van Seters’s explanation is very difficult to accept. As a parody of Deuteronomistic ideology it is quite subtle, and as a condemnation of David it fails miserably, because it provides him with an alibi for everything it accuses him of.

In sum, then, despite some evidence to the contrary, it does appear that the idea of literary tension in apologies is borne out by this text. If one does seek to explain the tension away redactionally, one would have to go in the opposite direction of Van Seters—that an originally anti-Davidic story was later given a positive spin. But it is difficult to envision an historical context in which this would take place.

David stole Ahinoam, wife of Saul? At the conclusion of the story of David, Nabal, and Abigail, two verses appear as a sort of appendix that is often overlooked: “David had taken”¹⁰⁵ Ahinoam from Jezreel, and the two of them (Ahinoam and Abigail) were wives to him. And Saul had given Michal his daughter, the wife

105. I translate *lāqah* and *nātan* in these two verses as pluperfects because if the narrator were describing past action that took place after the previously narrated events about Nabal and Abigail, one would expect the *waw*-consecutive (cf. Levenson 1978, 27, esp. n. 31). Note that Fleming, who does not believe David’s Ahinoam was the same as Saul’s wife, nevertheless translates, “David had already taken Ahinoam of Jezreel” (2013, 102). A simple perfect reading is defensible, however. Whether one translates with the perfect or pluperfect can change the tone and rhetorical force of this passage, unless this is giving too much weight to how the passages sound in contemporary English. Use of the pluperfect could suggest that these verses are an afterthought, intended by the narrator to be overlooked: “by the way, David had also taken Ahinoam as his wife.” If so, that could strengthen the idea that including this note in this way is apologetic—the narrator was compelled to mention David’s marriage to Ahinoam, but he did not want to draw attention to it. Translating with the perfect draws more emphasis to the verse: “David (also) took Ahinoam as his wife.”

of David, to Palti son of Laish, who was from Gallim" (1 Sam 25:43–44). Although Ahinoam does not feature in any narratives in the Bible like Abigail or Michal, her significance may be even greater. Levenson was one of the first to draw attention to this, writing of the Ahinoam in 1 Sam 25, "Only one other person in the Hebrew Bible bears her name, and she, *mirabile dictu*, is a contemporary of David's. In fact, her husband is King Saul (1 Sam 14:50)!" (Levenson 1978, 27).¹⁰⁶ This appears to be more than simple coincidence. Thus Levenson and several later scholars have suggested that early on David somehow claimed one of Saul's wives as his own. Four bits of evidence support this: first, Ahinoam bore David's firstborn son (Amnon who will feature later), suggesting she was one of his earliest wives; second, although Saul's taking Michal from David and giving her to Palti in 1 Sam 25:44 is often interpreted as unrelated to the previous passage, Levenson points out that it was likely a calculated response to David's taking Ahinoam (1978, 27); third, defection (voluntary or otherwise) by Ahinoam could explain Saul's otherwise bizarre insult of Jonathan when David finally flees the royal court, the text reads, "Saul became angry with Jonathan, and he said to him, '(You) son of a perversely rebellious woman!'"¹⁰⁷ Don't I know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your shame and to the shame of the mother who bore you?" (Levenson and Halpern 1980, 515); and fourth, during his famous condemnation of David, Nathan asserts that Yahweh "gave ... the wives of your lord into your bosom" (2 Sam 12:8; I consider this verse to be part of a separate, later literary horizon, but that does not necessarily strip it of its value here in determining Ahinoam's status), an assertion that appears otherwise baseless—we have no hint that David took any other of Saul's wives as his own. I tentatively concur with Levenson and others who assert that at some point during his rise, we know not precisely when or how, David did take the wife of Saul for himself.¹⁰⁸

There are two options for interpreting the rhetorical strategy that lies behind this single verse. One can argue that Ahinoam appears here only in passing because of the egregiousness of the offense of taking one of the king's wives. Baden is the strongest proponent of this interpretation. After noting that taking Ahinoam would have been part of a (failed) bid for usurpation—the later stories of Absalom and Adonijah demonstrate just how important control of the king's harem was—Baden contends that "The entire narrative of David's time in Saul's service—from

106. Ahinoam appears only briefly in Levenson 1978; with Baruch Halpern he developed the idea more fully two years later. See Levenson and Halpern 1980, esp. pp. 513–16.

107. My translation of *ben na'arat hammardûr* in 1 Sam 20:30 follows Fleming 2013, 156. I do not necessarily agree with her about the ramifications of this insult, however.

108. This is accepted by most who treat the David narratives apologetically; see Halpern 2001, 87; McKenzie 2000a, 166–67; Baden 2013, 78–80. McCarter, however, contends that the Ahinoam of 1 Sam 25 "had nothing to do with Saul's wife by the same name" (1980a, 400). For the best recent overview of the issue, see Fleming 2013, 102–7; Fleming concurs with McCarter that the Ahinoam of 1 Sam 25:43 is more likely not the same as Saul's wife.

Saul's crazed attempts on David's life to the marriage to Michal to Jonathan's love for David—is effectively in the service of covering up this one unspeakable fact. The Bible could hardly ignore the common knowledge that Ahinoam did become David's wife. But it could defer the mention of the marriage until later in the narrative" (2013, 80). Although an interesting take on the Davidic apology, this interpretation raises some red flags. It implies that the biblical text, in approximately the form we have it, was compiled with a Davidic apology in mind.¹⁰⁹ This seems unlikely; as noted above in §5.2.2, the text we now have likely stems from the coalescing of traditions about David after the apologetic motivation lost some of its currency, at least with regard to specific charges.¹¹⁰ Baden's understanding is also inconsistent with what we see elsewhere in the Davidic apologist's rhetoric. When responding to deeds that were publicly known, such as the deaths of certain parties or David's time among the Philistines, the apologist does not attempt to distract the audience from them in hopes that the dubious deeds will be forgotten. He tends to face them head on, but explain in each case how circumstances are not what they appear. The apologist could of course have adopted a different strategy in handling the Ahinoam controversy—if a controversy it was—but it does caution us against this interpretation. If Baden is correct, we see here neither transformative nor reformatory rhetoric, but a variation of the strategy of omission. The apologist does note that David took Ahinoam as his wife, so it is not exactly omission, but he omits the entire back story of Ahinoam as Saul's wife. Moreover, in her five attestations in the David narratives (1 Sam 25:43; 27:3; 30:5; 2 Sam 2:2; 3:2), Ahinoam is always identified by her hometown; she is Ahinoam "from Jezreel." In the Saul narrative she is identified as Ahinoam "daughter of Ahimaaz" (1 Sam 14:50). Using the hometown rather than her patronymic could be part of the attempt to draw attention away from the fact that this is Saul's former wife.

An alternative understanding of the rhetorical strategy behind 1 Sam 25:43 is that there was no rhetorical strategy. It could be that a later tradent of the text, whether conscious or ignorant of Ahinoam's status as Saul's former wife, included

109. This is symptomatic of one serious flaw in Baden's book, namely, the lack of any treatment of the sources behind the biblical David narrative. He effectively does a literary reading of the text, working almost entirely from 1–2 Samuel in their final form, but he does this for the sake of drawing historical conclusions. For example, how does he justify lumping Michal and Jonathan together into burying the information about Ahinoam in light of the growing consensus that the Michal and Jonathan traditions stem from independent literary horizons? See Knapp 2014b.

110. I do not intend to imply here that David's legitimacy definitively became accepted by all within a few generations after his death. On the contrary, we see vestiges of continued sparring between Judahites and Benjaminites for several more centuries, and surely the David-Saul relationship played a role in this. But I doubt that a charge such as David taking Saul's wife for himself would have survived so long.

this statement (and v. 44) here on the basis of the common theme of David's early wives (v. 42 having just notified the reader that Abigail became David's wife).

Treatments of Ahinoam serve as bellwethers for scholarly understandings of David. Those who remain open to David's innocence, such as McCarter, tend to interpret the Ahinoam of 1 Sam 25:43 as a woman who happened to have the same name as Saul's wife and do not read much between the lines here. Those who condemn David as a murderer and traitor (to borrow from Halpern's famous title) tend to view Ahinoam as a key figure in the David-Saul rift whose seizure by David constituted one of his most obvious attempts at usurpation. Conscious of this, I plead ignorance when assessing this potential charge. The two areas of doubt here—first, foundationally, whether David's Ahinoam was the same as Saul's, and second, if so, how the apologist responded to David's detractors who raised this issue—combine to prevent any confidence in conclusions drawn for this episode. Fortunately the next charge is more clear.

David was a Philistine mercenary. The Hebrew Bible depicts the tenth century as a time of rivalry between Israelites and Philistines. The former inhabited the inland hill country while the latter resided in the lowlands along the coast, but the groups often clashed in the periphery between these two regions. The Philistines were admittedly technologically advanced, but idolatrous and belligerent, and the biblical record consistently portrays them with an us-versus-them nativist mentality. How could it be, then, that the man who united Israel and Judah was in fact a Philistine agent whom one Philistine king compared to “an angel of God” (1 Sam 29:9)? For this is precisely what TDRR admits: David sought and received asylum with Achish of the Philistines (2 Sam 27:1–4) and even mustered with the Philistine army for war—against Israel! (2 Sam 28:1–2; 29:1–2). To make this more incriminating, David did this precisely during the period when the Philistines gained the upper hand over the Israelites and King Saul and his children met their quietus, as will be explored further in the discussion of the following charge. Overall, when one scours the early traditions of David's rise, one can identify several dubious points of contact between David and the Philistines. Halpern summarizes,

What is certain is that David's opponents accused him of taking the side of the Philistines. They probably claimed he *was* a Philistine, or other alien, himself.¹¹¹ He came from a town, dependent for its trade on the Jebusites, which served as a “Philistine” base. He did military service for Philistines. His service so satisfied them that he earned command of his own town and the position of royal body-guard. He was implicated in the battle of Jezreel ... David came to

111. In the afterword of his book, Halpern writes that David's enemies “thought of him as the Gibeonite agent of Philistine masters” (2001, 479).

Judah and ultimately Jerusalem with a contingent of 600 Philistines from Gath. (Halpern 2001, 288–89)

None of this could have been lost on David's detractors; indeed, much of this surely contributed to David's having detractors in the first place. With the object of David's true loyalty such an open question, how could any of his subjects trust him?

The early traditions about David respond to this charge in two distinct, diametrically opposed ways, one reformatory and one transformative. The first explanation appears in the brief episode VIII. Here, David flees from Saul to Achish of Gath, but Achish's servants immediately quote the old anthem "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his myriads" (1 Sam 21:11–12[10–11]). This unnerves David so that he feigns insanity and Achish berates his servants for bringing a madman into his presence (1 Sam 21:13–16[12–15]). The passage ends abruptly, with David's immediate discharge from the Philistines assumed. In this account the apologist denies any connection between David and Achish. Yes, David fled to Achish, but he was greeted with suspicion and forced to leave. Thus he seeks to dispel the malicious rumors about David's alleged fealty to the enemies of Israel.

The second explanation is more sophisticated. It appears in episodes XV–XVII, which likely preceded episode XIX in the original source (leaving the first account of Saul's death, episode XVIII, to another source).¹¹² In this account the apologist accepts the charge of David's employment as a Philistine mercenary but responds with the rhetorical strategy of transcendence, introducing new information that changes this from damning David to praising him. Here, David again flees from Saul to Achish of Gath, this time not alone but with a cohort of 600 men (1 Sam 27:1–2). Achish welcomes him and sends him to live in Ziklag, from which David conducts raids and insinuates himself into Achish's favor (1 Sam 27:5–12). Later, when the Philistines prepare for battle with Israel, Achish brings David along but the other Philistine rulers distrust him, citing the anthem, "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his myriads," and thus David returns to Ziklag (1 Sam 28:1–2; 29:1–11). After hearing about Saul's death, David leaves Ziklag for Hebron, thus ending his Philistine foray. The overarching apologetic theme in the narration of these events is that throughout this period David's loyalty never wavered. He earned Achish's trust through masterful subterfuge, raiding non-Judahite towns ("the Geshurites and the Amalekites," 1 Sam 27:8),¹¹³ then lying to Achish about his victims (1 Sam 27:10–12). The strategy worked by fully exterminating his foes, leaving no survivors to report his true actions to Achish. Thus even when allegedly on the side of the Philistines, David never lifted a finger against any Israelites or Judahites; on the contrary, he engaged in a series of raids against their enemies. The

112. This is recognized by every model of two parallel sources that I have seen. See the reconstructions by Halpern, Hutton, and Van Seters in §5.2.2.

113. On the reading of these peoples, see McCarter 1980a, 413. MT reads "the Geshurites, the Gezerites, and the Amalekites."

apologist portrays David further as biding his time until he can turn on the Philistines—David eagerly assembles his men with the Philistines when they go to war with Israel, then expresses his frustration that he is prevented from fighting “the enemies of my lord, the king” (1 Sam 29:8). Even some of the Philistines realize this, as they eject him from their ranks with the rhetorical question, “With what could this one reconcile himself to his lord, if not with the heads of these men?” (1 Sam 29:4). In sum, those Israelites who accuse David of Philistine sympathies are just as gullible as Achish, who escaped David’s trickery only by the vigilance of his allies.

Of the charges with which David was indicted, his work as a Philistine mercenary is one of the more difficult to evaluate. This period of David’s life raises many unanswerable historical questions while simultaneously being one of the most conclusive proofs of the historiographical nature of (at least parts of) TDRR.¹¹⁴ Although his strategy of leaving no witnesses to report his behavior to Achish stretches the bounds of plausibility, one struggles to explain how, let alone why, one so entrenched in the Philistine ranks could simply switch sides and gain the allegiance of his archenemies. One’s verdict in this case will likely be determined by how one interprets the following charge, to which we now turn.

David was involved in the deaths of Saul and his sons. Like the previous charge, this one has two distinct apologetic responses in TDRR. In one (episode XVIII), Saul commits suicide alongside his sons; in the other (episodes XIX–XX), Saul, already mortally wounded, is mercifully killed by an Amalekite who happens upon him.¹¹⁵ In both, Saul’s demise occurs on Mount Gilboa, in the region of Jezreel in the north. David meanwhile is far to the south at Ziklag, his home base in the Negev. As usual, the apologist(s) makes no mention of a charge of David’s involvement here, and one would not infer that such a charge ever existed if not for three things. First, David and his men accompanied the Philistine army as far as Aphek (28:1–2; 29:1). If we assume, with many other interpreters of the Davidic apology, that most of the incriminating details were included because they were publicly known and could not be denied, then we can explain this otherwise inexplicable detail quite reasonably. The presence of David’s contingent with the Philistines during the march to this fateful battle must have been known to the Israelites, and if so, this must have been unforgiveable. David, the king of Israel, had partici-

114. The episodes of David among the Philistines make no sense as a late fiction. This would be akin to a Scottish eulogist inventing a phase in the life of William Wallace during which he betrayed Scotland to fight for the English, only to then pretend that he didn’t.

115. McCarter and some others do not see these two accounts as contradicting each other because while the omniscient narrator tells us of Saul’s fate in the first account, in the second the death is related by the Amalekite who inflicted it. Thus if one assumes that the Amalekite is lying, the problems evaporate (McCarter 1984, 62–64). Given the presence of doublets elsewhere in TDRR and the fact that the narrator of 2 Sam 1 gives no indication that the Amalekite is attempting to deceive David, I do not find this persuasive.

pated in the battle in which Israel's earlier king died and had fought on the side of Israel's mortal enemies. Next, in the second account the Amalekite delivers Saul's regalia, "the crown that was on his head and (the) bracelet" (הַנֹּזֶר אֲשֶׁר עַל-רִאשׁוֹ) (ואצטודה, 2 Sam 1:10), to David. One must conclude in light of this that (a) David possessed Saul's regalia, and (b) this account was disseminated in order to explain how David came into possession of the regalia since he was allegedly off raiding in the southern desert when Saul perished. When one combines these facts with the third questionable element—the simple principle of *cui bono*, for David benefited greatly from Saul meeting his end—one can easily see that David's involvement must have been taken for granted by many of his new subjects who formerly owed allegiance to Saul.

The apologist responds to each piece of potentially damning evidence. First, although his contingent was seen in the Philistine muster, David and his men were dismissed long before reaching Jezreel (1 Sam 29:1–11). In fact, they were dismissed precisely because many of the Philistine leaders knew of David's reputation and his loyalty to Israel. The narrator proves that the Philistines were correct to dismiss him by including David's frustration "that I may not go and make war against the enemies of my lord the king" (1 Sam 29:8). Although this not-so-ambiguous remark fools the naive Achish, the reader knows that this refers to David's unwavering loyalty to Saul. As for David's possession of Saul's regalia, the apologist points out that it was brought to him by an Amalekite. David did not order, nor was he even aware of, the Amalekite's actions. Interestingly, like Nabal's earlier insinuation that David was an outlaw, so the Amalekite's speech echoes the thoughts of David's contemporaries—he assumed David would be delighted with his disposal of Saul and raced to Ziklag to deliver the news and the regalia in order to ingratiate himself with the presumed new regime. The maneuver backfired, however, as David ordered his execution for violating Yahweh's anointed (2 Sam 1:14–16).

Obviously the apologist could not counter the fact that David benefited from Saul's death, but he did address it circuitously. Through the two episodes in which David spared Saul's life (XII, XIV), the apologist(s) declares that David's respect for the sanctity of Yahweh's anointed surpasses any possible benefit he might get for himself by murdering Saul. David is depicted here as the transcendent nonretaliator who refused to kill Saul even when provided with golden opportunities. When his men suggest that Yahweh's providence has delivered Saul to them, David restrains them from killing him, trusting that if Yahweh wants him to die he can take care of it himself (24:5–8[4–7]; 26:8–11). Despite the public rift between them and Saul's many attempts on his life, David remained loyal to Saul and his household. Even when David learns of Saul's death, he does not celebrate but composes a lament for the fallen heroes (episode XX), and he later encourages the citizens of Jabesh-Gilead for their kind treatment of Saul's body (2 Sam 2:4–7).¹¹⁶

116. Just before I completed this book, Boris Nemtsov, a leading critic of the Russian

Thus, despite all appearances to the contrary, the apologist absolves David completely in the matter of Saul's death. He was in the Negev attending to a brewing mutiny among his men when Saul fell, and he did not learn what had happened until three days later (2 Sam 1:2). If David had been in Jezreel, he would have fought on the side of the Israelites, the people from whom his allegiance never strayed. Interestingly, the apologist uses entirely reformatory rhetoric here, the evidence linking David to the battle notwithstanding. If David had fought on the side of the Philistines and had gone after the Israelite king, one would expect a sufficient number of witnesses that the apologist would have been forced to spin the deed positively rather than adopt a strategy of denial. Perhaps this unexpected response indicates that David truly did not engage in the battle, and readers of the apology should balance cynicism with credulity. Or perhaps the apologist simply did not have an acceptable transformative response at his disposal and figured that the bedlam of battle would make his absence, at the very least, plausible.

David was responsible for the death of Abner. Although the apologist does not overtly acknowledge the charge against David of involvement in Abner's death, the treatment of this incident provides one of the most blatant demonstrations of the apologetic mode of TDRR anywhere in the text. After Saul's death his son Ish-Baal assumed kingship, but he held office primarily as a figurehead while Saul's general, Abner, wielded the real power (2 Sam 3:6). Abner sundered his relationship with the house of Saul (2 Sam 3:7–8, 11–12), convinced the elders of Israel to defect to David (2 Sam 3:17–18a), and surreptitiously came to David at Hebron and made a pact to unite Israel with him (2 Sam 3:12–16, 20–21). But just when things seemed to be going well, Abner, like so many others of David's enemies, turned up dead. Again suspicions must have fallen immediately on David, but again the apologist has an explanation.¹¹⁷

president Vladimir Putin, was assassinated. Many in the public immediately accused Putin of orchestrating the murder, pointing to a list of other enemies of Putin similarly killed. Putin, meanwhile, responded by tweeting condolences to Nemtsov's family and declaring that the perpetrator(s) of this crime would be found and punished. The parallels here are unmistakable (and apply equally to the following two charges against David)—a prominent political figure is killed, leading the public to suspect their known nemesis, who expresses his sadness at the murder and demands justice. In both cases it is easy to see why the majority of the populace immediately imputes guilt to the enemy of the murdered party, even though no evidence ties him to the deed (unless one interprets David's possession of Saul's regalia as such evidence). This serves to reinforce that situations calling for apologetic responses are not confined to any one civilization. I should note, though, that the similarities I see between David and Putin end here—I do not wish to carry on the tradition of comparing David to modern despots.

117. The text does not provide an obvious motive for David to desire Abner's death, though many feasible possibilities can be conjectured. The noticeable omission of what David promised Abner in the treaty—the text only records Abner's offer to deliver all Israel to him, without any mention of what is in the deal for Abner—may pertain to this; see

The apologist argues that while David and Abner departed on good terms, David's general, Joab, had a blood feud with Abner because he had previously killed Joab's brother (episode XXIII). Without David's knowledge, Joab pursued Abner from Hebron and killed him because of this private vendetta, "so [Abner] died on account of the blood of Asahel, [Joab's] brother" (2 Sam 3:27; cf. also 2 Sam 3:30). When David learned of it, he cursed Joab for his vile deed (2 Sam 3:29). The apologist thus employs the rhetorical strategy of denial. Abner left David "in peace" (2 Sam 3:21, 22); David "did not know" that Joab pursued him with malicious intent (2 Sam 3:26); and when David learned of the deed, he declared, "I and my kingdom are innocent before Yahweh forever of the blood of Abner son of Ner" (2 Sam 3:28). He then organized an elaborate mourning ceremony to further convince all the people of his grief at Abner's untimely fate (2 Sam 3:31–36). With such emphasis on David's innocence, the apologist betrays his true motivation for composing the text here. In other situations the apologist remains behind the curtain and one must read between the lines somewhat to discover the apologetic motivation for composing this text, but here he lays his cards on the table. Near the conclusion of the episode one finds the line that epitomizes ancient Near Eastern apologetic: "And all the people, and all Israel, knew that day that David was not involved in the killing of Abner, son of Ner" (2 Sam 3:37).

This begins a theme that runs throughout the rest of TDRR; from this point on Joab plays a major role in the apologies of both David and Solomon. The apologist pins two further murders on Joab (Absalom and Amasa), exonerating David in these cases and also providing Solomon with justification for later executing Joab.¹¹⁸ When examining the charge from our remove, it is difficult to accept all these accounts completely at face value. David condemns Joab for his violent behavior (2 Sam 3:38–39) and even curses him before Yahweh (2 Sam 3:28–29), but never takes any action against him—on the contrary, Joab maintains his position over the army, in one case taking the office promised to the man he slew (2 Sam 19:14[13]).¹¹⁹ This recalls the charge against Telipinu of collaboration in the deaths of Huzziya and his brothers, which Telipinu condemns while simultaneously pardoning those responsible for the crime (§3.3). When one combines this with the growing trend in David's career and his overly profuse protestations of innocence,

VanderKam 1980, 529–33. Alternatively, if one assumes David's guilt, the pact between Abner and himself could have been an apologetic invention to throw suspicion off of David by depriving him of a motive.

118. The similarity of these units has led some to posit the existence of an anti-Joabite redactional layer (Schulte 1972, 148–54; Würthwein 1974, 43–47). This idea has some merit, but if so, the redactional material is probably a thin layer that drew further attention to Joab's guilt, and not something substantive.

119. I refer here to Amasa but this could also be the case with Abner; cf. VanderKam 1980, 532.

one cannot help but wonder about the veracity of the apologist's claims (cf. Halpern 2001, 310; McKenzie 2000a, 121–22; VanderKam 1980, 533).

For those more skeptical of establishing any historical details about David's life, herein lies one of the major problems with treating the David narrative as a late fiction. Those who hold this view must provide an alternative explanation for why the text continually places David in exceedingly suspicious circumstances only to free him from culpability in each instance. Halpern describes it well: "So when 'minimalists' compare [David's] image to that of King Arthur, differences are immediately apparent: Arthurian legend does not convict him as a murderer, and does not spend most of its time apologizing for the fact that his enemies keep dying violently" (2001, 76).

Consider, for example, how Van Seters (2009, 276) treats the case of Abner:

Much is made of David's great show of grief and protestation that he is innocent (vv. 31–39), which are certainly intended to persuade the Israelites, whose real leader had been Abner. Some scholars want to interpret this public demonstration by David as a cover-up for a crime that he himself instigated, and to read the account here as mere propaganda. However, as we saw above, this sort of "against-the-grain" reading of the text is only possible if it reflects an actual event that is deliberately being misrepresented for political purposes. As we have argued above, all of these episodes in the *David Saga* are fiction, so that whatever the author tells us about David's part in Abner's death we must accept as his story. The author himself may cast doubt on David's words and actions, but what he gives us as 'facts' cannot be changed.

Van Seters dismisses any apologetic mode in this text, as he must since he has determined on other grounds that the text is a late fiction. But this leaves him no explanation for the obvious tension in this episode (and several others). His suggestion that the author casts doubt on the story of his own invention does not make sense. He responds elsewhere to apparent contradictions in the text by stating simply, "In fiction, anything is possible" (2009, 97 n. 17), an argument that leaves something to be desired.

Short, another scholar who does not accept the apologetic nature of the David story (though for far different reasons than Van Seters), also struggles with the Abner episode. He eventually resorts to the explanation that while the other defenses are subtle, in the case of Abner the narrator "defends David's innocence too transparently, in fact, to be characterized as the same sort of rhetorical posturing that McCarter perceives in the responses to the other putative charges" (2010, 125). He thus accepts that in this case David's innocence is being defended, but only within the confines of the narrative world, not to the outside audience. Thus, if the author defends David subtly, an apologetic reading imposes its own assumptions on the

text, and if the author defends David transparently, an apologetic reading is too obvious to accept.

David was responsible for the death of Ish-Baal. Again we surmise that this accusation was leveled against David on account of someone else's property ending up in his possession. This time it is not a man's wife or regalia, but his head. The apologist must explain how David, despite remaining loyal to the house of Saul, suddenly finds himself with the head of Saul's son and successor. With David in Hebron and Ish-Baal in Transjordan, David could only have orchestrated the latter's assassination if he had thoroughly infiltrated the ranks of Saul. But this is a distinct possibility given Abner's recent defection and the apparent eagerness of Israel to come to join him (as evidenced by the actions of the assassins in this passage and the ensuing anointment of David in 2 Sam 5:1–3). In any event, the apologist counters this by presenting Baanah and Rechab as proactively assassinating Ish-Baal to earn David's favor, not unlike the Amalekite who earlier claimed to have killed Saul. Also like the Amalekite, the two discover that the only reward for their deed is execution (2 Sam 4:9–12), which serves to show just how violently David objected to the murder. The assassins are Benjaminites (2 Sam 4:2), of the tribe of Saul, and thus not obvious candidates for David to attempt to turn traitor. The apologist opens the episode by stating that Abner's death left all Israel dismayed, and Ish-Baal himself lost confidence (2 Sam 4:1), which is ironic given that Abner had only been in the reach of David's men in order to betray him. Thus the assassins seem only to precipitate the inevitable downfall of the house of Saul.

Overall, the defense of David in this case is plausible. With Abner gone, the writing may have been on the wall in the war between the house of David and the house of Saul, and these events may have run their course without any (further?) catalysis by David. On the other hand, as another notch is added to the count of David's enemies who shed their mortal coils at times extremely convenient for David, one cannot help but wonder at the convenience of it all (see Halpern 2001, 310; McKenzie 2000a, 125–26).

David arrested Merib-Baal and gave away his estate. With Saul's offspring nearly eradicated,¹²⁰ only the crippled Merib-Baal remained as a scion of this once-great household of Israel. But although Merib-Baal escaped execution, he remained confined in the household of David, away from his inherited holdings (2 Sam 9:11–13). This conformed to a common means of dealing with political prisoners in the ancient Near East, and David's detractors must have considered Merib-Baal a detainee.¹²¹ Additionally, Merib-Baal's estate was now in the posses-

120. Or about to be—this depends on what one makes of the relative sequence between this episode (XXXII) and the episode of the execution of the Saulides (XLV); see above, §5.2.2.

121. Placing political prisoners under house arrest in the royal palace is attested elsewhere in the biblical record; Jehoiachin of Judah was detained thus by the Babylonian king Evil-

sion of a certain Ziba, formerly his servant (2 Sam 19:30–31[29–30]). This seemed to present yet another obvious instance of David aggrieving the house of Saul.

There are two ways of interpreting the response to this charge, both of which involve a transformative rhetorical strategy on the part of the apologist(s)—no facts are denied, but it is suggested that they be interpreted in a different light. The different means of response depends on one's source-critical conclusions regarding the three passages in 2 Sam 9; 16:1–4; and 19:25–31[24–30]. One can make a case that these all belong to the same literary horizon; alternatively, the latter two passages present a doublet of 2 Sam 9, both of which apologize for the fact that Ziba now controls the ancestral estate belonging to Merib-Baal. Either way, the interpretation is straightforward. The apologist responsible for 2 Sam 9 first places the putative imprisonment in the context of David's loyalty to Jonathan: "And David said, 'Is there yet anyone who remains of the house of Saul, that I may deal with him faithfully on account of Jonathan?'" (2 Sam 9:1). Thus the initial search for Saul's heirs stems not from desire to have them watched for security reasons, but from his need to honor his fallen friend and ally. This transforms David's taking Merib-Baal into his household from a punishment to a kindness, from incarceration to an opportunity to be taken care of. As for the transfer of property from Merib-Baal to Ziba: that was Merib-Baal's own idea! David appointed Ziba steward of the property simply as a means of seeing that the estate was still tended in Merib-Baal's absence (2 Sam 9:9–10). This passage functions reasonably as an independent unit—the defense being that Merib-Baal still technically owns his land; Ziba is only stewarding it for him—or it may be only the opening act.

The next two passages, which either provide a continuation of 2 Sam 9 or stand alone, describe a (later?) conflict that arose between Merib-Baal and Ziba. David was forced to adjudicate in a he-said/he-said argument concerning which man was loyal to him and which betrayed him (2 Sam 16:1–4; 19:25–30[24–29]), and in the absence of any evidence to prove the case in favor of either one, he split the land between them. But Merib-Baal, elated at the return of his benefactor, forswore any claim to the estate and granted it all to Ziba (2 Sam 19:31[30]). One cannot help but be skeptical here, especially in regard to the latter aspect of the defense. Even if Merib-Baal were so overcome with exuberance that he cared nothing for the reinstatement of his lands, would he actively encourage David to transfer it to the uppity steward who dishonestly undermined him in a way that could have cost him his life ("let him take it all," *את-הכל יקה*, 2 Sam 19:31[30])? The facts of the Merib-Baal episodes continue to confound on both textual and historical levels.

Merodach (2 Kgs 25:27–30). Later in TDRR, when David "requests" that Barzillai the Gileadite accompany him to his household, Barzillai declines but must offer up someone else to go in his stead; thus Chimham becomes David's hostage (2 Kgs 19:32–41[31–40]).

David was involved in the death of Amnon? Another charge that may have been brought against David was his involvement in the death of his firstborn son, Amnon. Two years after Amnon raped his half-sister and Absalom's full sister Tamar, he was killed at a feast thrown by Absalom. The murder follows the script of several others in that someone close to David (his son Absalom) does the deed, but David himself is not implicated and has an alibi. Given the correspondence to the other murders, one might reasonably assume that Amnon's death was convenient to David and aroused the suspicions of his subjects. But the existence of this charge is not as obvious as the others advanced here. Although at least two elements in the narration can be construed as apologetic—the emphasis on the fact that David was not at the feast when Amnon was killed (2 Sam 13:24–25)¹²² and David's public demonstration of grief upon his death (2 Sam 13:36), the latter of which we recall from the apologies for the deaths of Saul and Abner—the principle of *cui bono* is not readily apparent. Scholars have suggested that the motive lay in Amnon's connection to Saul's line via his mother, Ahinoam (see above, pp. 226–29). Halpern writes, Amnon's "removal eliminates the last vestiges of Saul's legacy from the succession—it is a part of David's extermination of the Saulide line" (2001, 87; so also Baden 2013, 195). Yet even if Amnon's mother, Ahinoam, was Saul's former wife, it is difficult to see how he was in any way a Saulide. Halpern's musings on how David pulled the strings on removing Amnon are fascinating, even if I remain ultimately unpersuaded. He sees David as a master puppeteer throughout this scenario. In the first case, "Possibly, David instigated the rape: after all, Jonadab, David's nephew, counseled Amnon, yet thereafter remained in good odor in court, according to the text (2 Sam. 13:3–5, 32–33). Provocateur or free agent? His continued good standing inclines one to the former interpretation" (Halpern 2001, 87–88). Halpern does not stop there. He then suggests that Absalom's dispatch of Amnon, followed by his three years in semi-exile, followed by his restoration and assumption of the position of heir apparent, indicates that David and Absalom likely conspired to get rid of Amnon to their mutual benefit: "This looks like a put-up job. David had a problem, which Absalom solved. Absalom took the consequences and returned to court—the return greased by Joab. Yet if there was a deal between David and Absalom, it probably involved assurances that vengeance would bring Absalom nearer the crown" (Halpern 2001, 89; again followed by Baden 2013, 195).

Halpern's elaborate theory does tie everything together neatly, but it also requires far more reading between the lines than with the other charges covered

122. The emphasis on David's absence from the scene of Amnon's murder appears overtly in the note that David "refused to go" to the feast (2 Sam 13:25). Baden points out further, "We are told that David initially thought all the princes had died at Absalom's hand, which is narratively useless, as this mistaken impression is immediately corrected and never comes up again—in other words, David was so ignorant of what was happening that he actually got the facts mixed up" (2013, 194).

here. Unlike the other victims, whose deaths paved the way for David's rise and the security of his reign, Amnon posed no threat to David that is readily discernible from the resources we possess.¹²³ In the absence of a motive for David to dispatch his own son, it seems wisest to refrain from assuming that his contemporaries accused him of involvement here, let alone implicate him ourselves (*contra* Halpern 2001, 87–89; McKenzie 2000a, 166–67; Baden 2013, 94–97).

David was responsible for the death of Absalom. Though it is difficult to assert with confidence that David's contemporaries accused him of involvement in the death of his firstborn, allegations of responsibility for the death of another son, Absalom,¹²⁴ are self-evident. Unlike with Amnon, the text makes it clear that Absalom was a threat to David—he led a revolution against his father, usurped the kingship, and mustered the Israelites to pursue David and his loyal followers to Transjordan.¹²⁵ Absalom did not survive the ensuing skirmish, thus all signs pointed to David having engineered his demise. Yet again, the apologist contends that the circumstantial evidence is misleading and employs the rhetorical strategy of denial, and by this point one can almost guess how David's innocence is demonstrated.

Two aspects of the apology we have already seen in the defenses of David's innocence regarding the deaths of Saul, Abner, and Ish-Baal. First, David is shown not to have been present at the site of Absalom's death. Although he desired to be

123. Scholars point out that in addition to his status as (some sort of) Saulide, Amnon may have presented a threat as the heir apparent (Halpern 2001, 87; McKenzie 2000a, 166–67)—but nearly every ancient king had a firstborn son, and they tended not to murder them. Also, eliminating Amnon would not have eliminated the existence of an heir apparent, only changed his identity (this is likely the case, anyway, though we do not have specific information regarding the protocol of royal succession in the early monarchy). As the subsequent events of David's reign showed, having Absalom as the heir apparent certainly did not safeguard David's rule, so if that was the point then it was a strategic blunder. Overall, one can posit any number of reasons why Amnon might have threatened David and become a target, but none of these are evident from the text we have.

124. Absalom is David's third-born according to 2 Sam 3:3. The second son according to this list, Chileab, does not appear in any narrative sources.

125. Given Absalom's public insurrection, one question that springs to mind is, Why did the apologist feel compelled to vindicate David in this matter at all? Absalom proved himself a traitor, and as such neither deserved nor required mercy from the king. The likely answer is that Absalom still commanded the loyalty of a significant portion of the people while there was disaffection with David's rule (which is what allowed the revolution to gain traction in the first place). In this vein McCarter writes, "The narrator is attempting to evoke sympathy for David, probably addressing himself to former supporters of Abishalom's cause in the aftermath of the revolt.... When the audience has been made aware of what actually took place on the day of the battle in the Forest of Ephraim, they will understand that David is not to be blamed for Abishalom's death and, therefore, that he has not forfeited his claim on the loyalty of those Israelites who followed Abishalom" (1984, 410).

involved in the battle, his men convinced him to stay in the city for his own protection (2 Sam 18:2–4). Second, after Absalom’s death, David publicly laments his loss (2 Sam 19:1–5[18:33–19:4]). This latter point, although common to the apologist’s response to other charges, is particularly emphatic here and serves to reinforce a greater argument for David’s innocence: David does not have the character of a filicide. David loves his sons to a fault and does not discipline them even when they deserve chastisement (cf. McCarter 1981, 365–66), and he is depicted as having a special concern for Absalom (2 Sam 13:39–14:1, 33). His grief at the death of his rebellious and patricidally inclined son is so great that it shames his victorious army and would have caused further mutiny if not for Joab’s intervention and appropriately stern rebuke (2 Sam 19:6–9[5–8]). Throughout the rebellion David’s primary concern was Absalom’s well-being; even when his son sought his life, his lone instruction to the army was, “Deal softly (טִלָּךְ) with Absalom for me” (2 Sam 18:5).

But as was the case with Abner, the apologist pins the deed on Joab, who acted without David’s knowledge in eliminating the threat. Here Joab’s crime defies David’s explicit order, which he could not claim ignorance of because “all the people heard when the king commanded all the captains concerning Absalom” (2 Sam 18:5).¹²⁶ The insubordination goes unpunished, however, leaving Joab in position for one more murder, and to that we now turn.¹²⁷

David was responsible for the death of Amasa. Amasa’s downfall provides another obvious case where treachery on David’s part must have been assumed. After quelling Absalom’s rebellion, David found himself in a vulnerable position with sectional hostility breaking out and various factions questioning their loyalty to him. He responded with a political move that must have disgusted him—in order to mollify the disgruntled Judahites, he promoted Amasa, Absalom’s commander and right-hand man, to Joab’s position of captain of the army (2 Sam 19:14–15[13–14]).¹²⁸ The move worked and Judah returned to David, but the promotion proved short lived. When another rebellion erupted, David’s first order to Amasa was to

126. As was the case in the episode with Abner (cf. 2 Sam 3:37), the text here transparently betrays its apologetic function.

127. One could interpret David’s promotion of Amasa to captain of the army in place of Joab (2 Sam 19:14[13]) as a punishment of Joab, but the narrator does not draw any connection here. Instead, Amasa’s promotion is presented as an attempt to curry favor with the Judahites. Moreover, in short order David gave himself an excuse to return control of the army to Joab (see below).

128. McKenzie contends that the appointment of Amasa is “historically dubious” (2000a, 171) on the grounds that David would not have appointed the commander of his enemy’s troops so rapidly. But this seems to miss the point that David was forced into the move by the deserting Judahites. This explains both why he publicly elevated Amasa (see McCarter 1984, 432) and why he then sought to undo the promotion when an opportunity presented itself (2 Sam 20:4–6). The narrative is entirely reasonable from an historical perspective.

muster the Judahites within three days—an impossible task (see Halpern 2001, 91). Amasa inevitably failed and David used this as an excuse to reinstall Joab over the army.¹²⁹ This apparently was not vengeance enough, because shortly afterward Amasa was murdered and left on the road for the entire army to see (as an object lesson?) as they marched with Joab.

For a third time the apologist imputes guilt to Joab, although the apologetic nature of this episode (XLIH) is not as unequivocal as that of the previous two (XXIII, XLI). David simply does not appear in this incident after ordering his men to suppress the new rebellion. Joab's disembowelment of Amasa is related in detached, though gory, detail, without the express mention of any motive (perhaps because Joab's motive was so obvious). By this point in the story, David's gentle character and Joab's ruthlessness are apparently so well established that the apologist need not expound on the murder. David would not have stooped to the level of clandestine murder instructions; Joab took it upon himself to remove his enemy. Yet again, however, Joab escaped censure, and he maintained a prominent role in the royal court until David's son and successor intervened. But that belongs to Solomon's apology, and we have not yet finished enumerating the allegations put forth against David.

David exterminated the house of Saul. The oft-overlooked episode (XLV) that serves as the foundation of the final accusation against David appears only in the "appendix" to 2 Samuel, among six disconnected passages that together form the final four chapters of the book. This episode relates how seven Saulides, two of Saul's children and five of his grandchildren, were handed over to a group of Gibeonites and executed "on the mountain before Yahweh" (בְּהַר לִפְנֵי יְהוָה, 2 Sam 21:9). That this happened under the auspices of David was shockingly incriminating; the public must have agreed with the words of Halpern that "David can be said to have adopted a policy of systematic extermination toward the House of Saul" (2001, 86). In fact, this episode may lie behind Shimei's curse of David during Absalom's rebellion: "Bloodstained man! Scoundrel! Yahweh has returned on you all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you reign" (2 Sam 16:7–8).

As in the case of the episode with Merib-Baal (XXXII), the apologist does not attempt to deny the plain facts but adopts a transformative rhetorical strategy.¹³⁰ Yes, David handed over Saul's progeny to be executed, but this was not part of

Contrary to McKenzie, it seems much more difficult to explain why the narrator would fabricate the appointment of Amasa only to have David renege in the following scene.

129. There is some textual confusion here. MT and LXX both report that after Amasa failed to muster the Judahites within the allotted time period, David charged Abishai with leading his men (2 Sam 20:6). But the Syriac and Josephus both read Joab instead of Abishai here, and throughout the rest of the passage Joab is in control (once accompanied by Abishai; 2 Sam 20:10). Whatever name was originally mentioned in v. 6, it is Joab who leads the army afterward.

130. The relationship of these two episodes remains open to debate; it is difficult to discern

a premeditated plan of extinguishing this bloodline at all. In fact, the slaughter was not even David's idea. David told the Gibeonites that he would grant them whatever they requested of him in order to rectify a previous injustice done to them (2 Sam 21:1–4), and they came up with the idea of killing the Saulides (2 Sam 21:5–6).¹³¹ Furthermore, David was not acting in the interest of his dynasty, but in the interest of the entire land. He initially approached the Gibeonites—after consulting Yahweh—in an effort to stave off a famine. And here we see how the opening verse of the passage already delivered the rhetorical *coup de grâce*: The famine was the result of Saul's sin! It was because Saul broke the Israelites' oath to the Gibeonites and killed them that everyone suffered.¹³² The uprightness of David's action is confirmed by the notice at the end of the passage that the Saulide sacrifice was found acceptable: "Afterward God accepted the supplication of the land" (2 Sam 21:14).¹³³

The apologist's rhetoric is beautifully coherent: Saul's sin brought about Israel's plight, so removing his offspring placated the deity and restored the nation's prosperity. Nevertheless, one wonders how persuasive the apology's audience found this particular defense. In the throes of a national crisis—if the crisis was historical and not an apologetic invention—David's solution was to blame it on his predecessor and eradicate his descendants. The notion that Yahweh was propitiated by the slaughter of Saul's line was astonishingly convenient for David—indeed, "convenient" appropriately describes the death of every prominent enemy of David during his ascension and rule.

whether David's interaction with Merib-Baal was known within the literary horizon of this passage (see §5.2.2).

131. It is difficult to determine whether the apologist intended to present this as a rash vow that backfired due to the vower's shortsightedness, of the type of Jephthah's vow in Judg 11, Darius's decree regarding the lions' den in Dan 6, or Herod's vow to Salome in the New Testament (Matt 14). David's promise has the same character of unknown consequences, but he does not express remorse like the archetypal rash vowers, and the narrator's mention of the Gibeonites' reason for hostility toward Saul in the introduction of the passage suggests that David might have expected what happened.

132. The narrator assumes that the incident of Saul slaughtering the Gibeonites is known to the audience, but it is not recorded in the biblical text. The Israelites' oath to the Gibeonites is, however (Josh 9).

133. Though not generally acceptable to modern sensibilities, the concept of transgenerational punishment is accepted in various places within the Hebrew Bible, even within the Decalogue (Exod 20:5–6, Deut 5:9–10). The Deuteronomist attributes the downfall of Judah to the sin of Manasseh despite his death fifty years previous (2 Kgs 23:26–27). Thus both the notion that Israel suffered for Saul's sin after his death, and that the suffering could be alleviated by sacrificing his offspring, had precedent. On the idea of transgenerational punishment, see Schipper 2010; he discusses this episode on pp. 99–100.

5.4 THE *SITZ IM LEBEN* OF THE TRADITIONS OF DAVID'S RISE AND REIGN

Determining the *Sitz im Leben* of any biblical text is notoriously difficult. One cannot resort to provenance for help as one can with many ancient Near Eastern texts, including most of the nonbiblical texts under consideration in this study. Also, the biblical text underwent countless stages of scribal transmission, being recopied and redacted along the way. Thus the most controversial aspect of the *Sitze im Leben* of many texts is their date, because this often involves first positing some "original" form of the text that underlies the version preserved in the *textus receptus*. Determining the context of the composition of TDRR is particularly convoluted—for starters, although I refer to TDRR as a "text," this is something of a misnomer. As I laid out in my discussion of the text above, I subscribe to the view that these passages do not represent the product of a single author or even a single school, but at least two independent streams of tradition about David. I also hold that the streams cannot be easily isolated; certain series of episodes do seem to show a common origin and one can often confidently exclude some particular episodes from others, but several episodes cannot be identified as parts of a larger tradition. Because of this, I will paint with a broad brush in this section—I neither desire nor consider it possible to situate each individual episode historically. I do think that it is possible to draw some conclusions that apply broadly to the streams of tradition that constitute TDRR, however, and that is what I intend to do here.

In *The Biblical Saga of King David*, Van Seters devotes two chapters to establishing the social and historical setting of the biblical David narrative (2009, 53–120). In the first he examines external evidence (especially socioarchaeological studies of tenth-century Palestine) and in the second he examines internal evidence. This is a sensible approach and I will follow it here. An immediate problem arises, however, in that unlike Van Seters, I do not think there is any pertinent external evidence. This is not because I espouse any dogmatic "biblical archaeology," but because I do not think that TDRR presupposes the burgeoning urban centers and massive building projects (which are largely absent from the archaeological record) that Van Seters and others say the biblical text demands. In his discussion of external evidence, Van Seters perpetuates a pervasive and unjust caricature of the scholars who accept some basic historicity in the David story. He insinuates that proponents of this view conceptualize "a powerful Davidic-Solomonic state that dominated the whole region of Syria-Palestine in the 10th century" (2009, 61), which is not the case. Compare this with McKenzie—whose work Van Seters specifically mentions in this context (2009, 53)—who writes, "Even if we accept the Bible's most extensive claims, [David's] empire consisted of Israel and Judah with hegemony over some of the adjoining regions (Edom, Moab, Ammon, and the Philistine coast) ... David conquered no real nations ... It is, moreover, open to question how firmly David controlled those areas that the Bible assigns to his empire.... Finally, even the degree of David's centralized control of his own highland

kingdom is difficult to gauge” (2000a, 148–49). Even before the rise of the Tel Aviv School of archaeology, David was envisioned as a chieftain-turned-monarch with only limited hegemony over surrounding regions (cf. McCarter 1986a).¹³⁴ The biblical claims of Davidic “empire” in TDRR are actually quite modest.¹³⁵

Without significant help from external evidence, we are thus left to determine the *Sitz im Leben* of TDRR entirely on the basis of internal evidence.¹³⁶ Scholars have attempted to do this in a variety of ways, but most are ultimately unsatisfactory. Since the time of Rost, many have argued that the David stories (particularly the Succession Narrative) derive from David’s contemporaries on the basis of verisimilitude. For example, when debating whether the Succession Narrative presents “fact or fiction,” Rost writes, “it must be granted that everything gives an impression of probability and realism, so much so that one would like to maintain that long stretches of the narrative come from immediate eye-witnesses” (1982, 104).¹³⁷ Despite how thoroughly this idea permeated later scholarship, its founda-

134. The revisionist historians often suggest that statehood did not truly emerge among the geopolitical entities of the Levant until the ninth century with the Omrides in Samaria and Hazael in Aram (cf. Van Seters 2009, 71). It is interesting in this light that in his analysis of the Tel Dan Inscription, Suriano suggests that “*mlk* in this context probably is better interpreted as denoting a ‘chieftain’ or ‘sheikh.’ Hazael’s declaration that he ‘killed seventy kings’ is most likely an indication of the type of power struggle that occurred in a society composed of tribal elements” (2007, 173). One wonders if the Hebrew *melek* should also be read in this way in TDRR. In this study I continue to use the vocabulary of king and monarchy when discussing David, but perhaps it is time to reevaluate the propriety of such terminology.

135. One might argue that in the context of the debate over the historical David, the revisionist historians continue to respond to the conception of David seen in the works of Albright, Bright, and some others of their generation. While not uncritical, these scholars tended to color their picture of the historical David with the later traditions of the Deuteronomist, Chronicler, etc., which led to portrayals such as that laid out in the opening paragraph of this chapter.

For a summary of the archaeological issues and a solid case for the antisestablishmentarian view, see Knoppers 1997.

136. Van Seters misrepresents scholars such as McCarter and McKenzie as basing their readings of the text on external evidence: “All of these proposals regarding the kinds of historical documents that lie behind the story of David have been based on the assumption, throughout most of the 20th century, that the archaeological evidence supported the kind of imperial monarchy that was reflected in the biblical record” (2009, 60). This statement is not true. The apologetic readings derive from the text itself, and the (mostly negative) archaeological evidence does not disconfirm them.

137. Rost tempers this somewhat by acknowledging that eye witnesses could not have been privy to all of the events relayed (including many private conversations). He eventually concludes, “The most probable explanation is that real historical facts are related here, but in a strongly stylized dress” (1982, 104).

tion is flimsy. Verisimilitude is a rather arbitrary category to which one can appeal without actual evidence, and there is little in the style and presentation of the story to demand contemporary authorship. One cannot dismiss the idea that a later writer could craft such a narrative based on limited information about the past.¹³⁸

A somewhat preferable approach is the search for specific items within the text that signify certain historical situations. For example, those who support an early date of the text have pointed to sources within the text, typically lists of names, that they claim could only possibly derive from the Davidic or Solomonic court.¹³⁹ But establishing a demonstrably early historical remnant is not easy, and in such cases where one succeeds in making a strong argument it generally pertains to only a small portion of text and is not broadly applicable.¹⁴⁰ In the opposite direction, those who support a late date of the text often point to anachronisms, aspects of the text that could not feasibly have been composed in the tenth or ninth centuries. Such arguments, too, tend not to convince because, as virtually all scholars recognize, the text underwent several stages of redaction. Gunn, for example, provides a list of anachronistic aspects of 2 Sam 9–1 Kgs 2 that suggest a date later than the tenth century (1978, 32–33), but most of these pertain to individual verses and can be explained on an *ad hoc* basis.¹⁴¹

Others attempt to date the text on the basis of linguistic evidence. Halpern, for example, suggests that the orthography, spelling, and grammar of 1–2 Samuel all suggest an early date (2001, 57–72). But this too suffers from various drawbacks. Again, the arguments often pertain to isolated passages, and the evidence tends to become confused when looking at larger sections of text. More important is the fact that linguistic arguments often depend on statistical analyses that are notoriously difficult to control and evaluate. Halpern himself admits, “Sorting out

138. See also the critiques of this idea in Van Seters 2009, 11 and Gunn 1978, 30–34.

139. “In the Deuteronomistic Historical Work these lists belong to that material of archival character which is of especial importance to the modern historian. To regard these lists as the result of post-Deuteronomistic redaction is quite without point. The Deuteronomist can scarcely have found reasons for alterations in material of this kind. Here he was able to take over his original unmodified. Since it is difficult to imagine such lists being handed on as isolated units through the centuries, they should probably be connected with a pre-Deuteronomistic summing up of the history of David and Solomon. There is no reason to doubt that these lists originated in the royal chancellery in Jerusalem and that they are most important historical sources” (Mettinger 1971, 7). See also Naʾaman 1996.

140. For example, McCarter argues persuasively for the early date of the list of David's heroes in 2 Sam 23 (1984, 500–501), but this helps us little with determining the date of further narrative sources.

141. Van Seters's discussion of the anachronism of the use of mercenaries (2009, 99–118), on the other hand, is methodologically sound—the mercenaries appear throughout the narrative and would be nearly impossible to attribute to a later glossator or even redactor. I do not accept his argument that the presence of mercenaries is anachronistic, however.

all these variables is beyond the patience of most scholars, including myself. So discussions in the professional literature tend to be impressionistic rather than comprehensive” (2001, 70). On the whole, I concur that TDRR gives the impression of having several features of Early Biblical Hebrew, though I do not place too much stock in this because of its impressionistic quality.¹⁴²

But while the aforementioned methods of dating the David narrative on internal grounds all have drawbacks, there remains one compelling piece of evidence—the very charges made against David outlined in the apologetic analysis above (§5.3). Examination of these charges highlights the defensive posture of the text and reveals it as a rhetorical discourse. Since every rhetorical discourse arises from a rhetorical situation, following the trail of crumbs back to this situation should allow us to locate the discourse’s origin historically.¹⁴³ The charges to which TDRR responds seek to delegitimize David by calling into question his conduct during his rise and reign, and they make no sense in a context generations or centuries after his life. They concern specific people and events that would have held little or no currency at a later stage.¹⁴⁴ Such charges seem to demand a context close to David himself, one in which a party disaffected with the reigning king attempted to undermine his legitimacy via personal attacks.

Given the disparate nature of the texts constituting TDRR and the presence of two or more independent streams of tradition, one hesitates to draw more specific conclusions regarding its *Sitz im Leben*. Nevertheless, I submit that McCarter’s

142. Other factors limit our ability to date biblical texts on linguistic evidence alone. Dating texts late on the basis of linguistic features is always questionable because the texts passed through generations of scribes, any of whom could modernize grammar, spelling, vocabulary, or other linguistic features. Dating texts early is likewise problematic because scribes could deliberately archaize; furthermore, we lack sufficient extrabiblical examples of early Hebrew to provide the data we need to establish the necessary typologies.

143. “A tree does not obtain its character-as-tree from the soil, but rhetorical discourse, I shall argue, does obtain its character-as-rhetorical from the situation which generates it. Rhetorical works belong to the class of things which obtain their character from the historical context in which they occur” (Bitzer 1968, 3).

144. *Contra* Short, who asserts, “the biblical account (in any of the reconstructed stages we have seen, including McCarter’s reconstructed HDR) can be read in light of multiple predicaments of multiple individuals and/or communities of people whom they might be understood as representing” (2010, 97). Elsewhere he writes, “The very nature of its [= the biblical story of David’s rise] purpose to inform the identity of the people as a whole has a departicularizing effect that makes it impossible, without more data than are currently available, to date the account and locate it in a singular Davidic context or period” (2010, 196–97). While this may apply to certain passages, most of these are later compositions, such as the account of David’s victory over “the Philistine” in 1 Sam 17. On the whole it is difficult to defend the idea that the David complex is “departicularizing”—the affairs of David himself, Saul, Abner, Ish-Baal, Absalom, Joab, and the many others with whom the text is concerned are quite particular.

conclusions regarding his reconstructed History of David's Rise (1 Sam 16:14–2 Sam 5:10*) apply to the Davidic apology even more broadly:

We might, therefore, agree with several recent scholars (Ward, Grønbaek, Mettinger) that [the apologist] was working in the early years of the divided kingdom, addressing himself to the issue of the secession and offering his defense of the Davidic throne. But because of his work's support of the free divine election of a new king it might seem actually to undergird the usurpation of Jeroboam rather than to oppose it. A defense of the Davidic dynasty is conspicuously lacking. It seems more likely, then, that the HDR is a document from the time of David himself, written before the development of the theology of dynastic promise under Solomon and directed toward those conservative elements in the north, especially in Benjamin, who were suspicious of the new king; that is, it was written in the atmosphere illustrated by the accounts of the Shimei incident in II Sam 16:5–14 and Sheba's revolt in II Sam 20:1–22. Its purpose was to justify the succession as a reflection of Yahweh's will and offer rebuttal to charges made against David. (McCarter 1980a, 29; cf. also McCarter 1980b, 502)

A disproportionate number of the charges to which TDRR responds concern David's dealings with the house of Saul—he is accused of involvement in the deaths of Saul, Abner, Ish-Baal, and the Saulides, and of imprisoning and dispossessing Merib-Baal. Coupled with the facts of Shimei's explicit accusation that David was responsible for “all the blood of the house of Saul” (2 Sam 16:8) and a Benjaminites-led revolt during David's reign (2 Sam 20), it is certain that those who supported Saul were not among David's staunchest advocates. These opponents of David's rule could have preyed upon nagging suspicions of David's illegitimacy among the more ambivalent sectors of the population by circulating the charges enumerated above. This could have worked particularly well at times of widespread disaffection with David's rule, of which there were many according to the biblical text, including the Absalom rebellion, the Sheba rebellion, the famine of 2 Sam 21, and the plague of 2 Sam 24. One might identify the rhetorical situation of David's apology as a means of responding to such a crisis.

Returning to the work of Van Seters, one detects a flaw in his reasoning concerning the relationship of the apologetic nature of the David narrative to the text's *Sitz im Leben*, and I will conclude with a brief response to this. Van Seters states that “the apology form¹⁴⁵ only has relevance if one can be certain that the narrative

145. I object to the use of “form” here because, as discussed in §1.5, apologies are not characterized by any formal criteria. This does not substantively affect Van Seters's comment here, however. Simply omitting the word “form,” or changing it to “mode” to acknowledge the rhetorical (as opposed to structuralist) nature of apologetic, obviates the problem.

is contemporary with the events described.... If the stories of David and Solomon are significantly later than the 10th century, then they cannot be interpreted as apologies for the reigns of these two kings” (2009, 59). Shortly afterward he responds to McKenzie as follows: “unless one can firmly establish the fact that the events mentioned in the story actually took place and are not fictitious, one cannot read a story such as this ‘against the grain’ any more than one can read any work of fiction against the grain” (2009, 59). I think Van Seters places the cart before the horse here. He begins his study by establishing (on what I submit is a dubious basis) the late date of the text, then allows this to drive his analysis of the narrative. Because he excludes the possibility of the apologetic mode of the text at the outset, he forces himself to ignore the self-evident rhetorical purpose of the David narrative and to creatively reinterpret the text to accommodate the rhetorical situation of the later period.¹⁴⁶ A preferable approach to this text, and to any text whose *Sitz im Leben* is not obviously constrained by external factors, is to allow literary analysis of the text to illuminate the rhetorical situation that elicited it.

146. Van Seters undercuts himself in the following paragraph, writing “At the most, it is suggested that we have to do only with some individual stories, which may have had apologetic tendencies, and that these were used by the later writers for their own purposes” (2009, 59). His admission that some “individual stories ... may have had apologetic tendencies” compels him to accept that these “individual stories” derived from some earlier, authentic Davidic context, which in turn attenuates his contention throughout the monograph that the *David Saga*, as he calls it, is in no way historiographic.

CHAPTER SIX

THE SUCCESSION NARRATIVE OF SOLOMON

6.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF SOLOMON'S ACCESSION

IN THE LAST CENTURY, historical Solomon scholarship has paralleled the vicissitudes of historical David scholarship, for which see my remarks at the beginning of §5.1 (see also J. M. Miller 1997b, 3–13). The Hebrew Bible is our only source for historical information about the controversial figure of Solomon, regarded by some as the ruler of a pan-Levantine empire who accumulated vast wealth, by others as an ahistorical figment. As with David, my own approach involves recognizing the Hebrew Bible as an historical resource but using it critically; this results in an interpretation somewhere between such polarized views.

According to the biblical account, when David grew old, his eldest living son,¹ Adonijah, began to prepare to accede to the throne by making overtures towards David's other children, certain influential members of David's court (notably the priest Abiathar and David's military leader, Joab), and the Judahites (1 Kgs 1:7, 9). As he threw a feast for these parties one day at En Rogel in the southern part of Jerusalem, a conspiracy unfolded back at the royal court. A rival faction, which consisted of Nathan the prophet, Zadok the priest, Benaiah the leader of the royal guard, and the king's wife Bathsheba, took the latter's son Solomon, processed him through Jerusalem, and anointed him as king (1 Kgs 1:38–40). Realizing he had been supplanted, Adonijah sought sanctuary at the altar, where he was granted amnesty by the new king in exchange for subordination to the new regime (1 Kgs 1:50–53).

Solomon's seizure of the throne succeeded without immediate repercussions, and the new ruler set about consolidating his grip on power. He first sent Benaiah to dispatch the recently amnestied Adonijah (1 Kgs 2:25). When Adonijah's supporter Joab learned of this, he too sought asylum at the altar, but did not receive it—Solomon again sent Benaiah, who killed Joab within the sanctuary (1 Kgs 2:28–31, 34). Lastly, Solomon turned his attention to Shimei, the Benjaminite who had opposed David's rule but had been granted clemency by the former king (2 Sam 16:5–14; 19:17–24[16–23]). Solomon confined him to Jerusalem, but three years later sent Benaiah to execute him (1 Kgs 2:36–43, 46). These three opponents having been eliminated, Solomon was secure on the throne (1 Kgs 2:46).

1. Cf. 2 Sam 3:2–5. This assumes that Chileab, who is entirely absent from the narrative record, died in his youth.

Here the biblical story of his accession ends, and the next chapter commences with the account of Solomon's reign (1 Kgs 3–11).

This sketch features some deliberate and conspicuous omissions. Most notable is the lack of input by David himself, despite his prominence in the biblical account. But given the fact that David's contributions to the story all take place behind closed doors, in private conversation with Solomon's supporters, and provide blatant support for the Solomonic agenda—and, by all appearances, his actions seem to go against what was known and expected by the populace (see 1 Kgs 2:15)—it seems prudent to refrain from attributing to David an active role in the events here. A second omission that deserves comment is Solomon's filiation. Although the majority of scholars subscribe to the idea that Solomon was David's biological son, enough doubt has been cast on this to render it a legitimate (pun intended) question.² On the whole, then, I submit that among scholars who subscribe to the basic historiographical character of the biblical description of Solomon, nearly all would accept the facts presented in the preceding sketch—and only those facts. Beyond this, one moves into the realm of uncertainty; scholars question the veracity of several points of the account on the grounds that the apologist fabricated certain conversations and events in order to justify the ruthlessness of an insecure and illegitimate despot. Indeed, as with so many other rulers under investigation in this study, the circumstantial evidence weighs heavily against Solomon—in terms of information that would have been publicly known during his day, one can say little more than that he took the throne and purged all his enemies shortly thereafter. We will explore how he defended himself below. For other historical accounts of Solomon, see especially the studies of J. Maxwell Miller (1997a, 1997b, 1991; also in Miller and Hayes 2006, 186–220).

6.2 THE TEXT

Although the Succession Narrative (SN) is subject to the compositional questions that surround all biblical texts,³ as a relatively self-contained unit it is far more manageable than the Traditions of David's Rise and Reign. Nevertheless, here too a source-critical study is necessary to explain why I treat the material I do. After outlining the text in §6.2.1 immediately below, I deal with the source criticism in §6.2.2.

2. Many suspect that the story of David and Bathsheba in 2 Sam 11–12 was composed primarily in order to combat rumors that Solomon was not David's son. Since this story is not part of Solomon's apology (see below), I do not deal with this question here.

3. See my remarks in section §5.2, which need not be repeated here.

6.2.1 Outline

I	1 Kgs 1:1–10	Adonijah's Preparations
II	1 Kgs 1:11–30a, 30b–35a, 38–40	The Enthronement of Solomon
III	1 Kgs 1:41–45, 49–53	The Aftermath of Adonijah's Feast
IV	1 Kgs 2:1–2, 5–9	David's Charge to Solomon
V	1 Kgs 2:13–23, 25	The Execution of Adonijah
VI	1 Kgs 2:28–31, 34–35	The Execution of Joab
VII	1 Kgs 2:36–43, 46	The Execution of Shimei

I. David has become an old man, and when he can no longer keep warm (1:1) and his sexual potency has abated (1:4), the time for succession is nigh. Adonijah, David's son through Haggith, "was exalting himself, saying, 'I will rule'" (1:5, *מתנשא אני אמלך*). Allying with the military leader Joab and the priest Abiathar (1:7), Adonijah throws a feast for "all his brothers, the sons of the king, and all the Judahites, the servants of the king" (1:9), but he fails to invite Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the head of the royal guard, and Solomon his brother (1:10). The battle lines are drawn.

II. Nathan and Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, fear for their lives because of Adonijah's elevation. They each seek an audience with David to tell/remind him that he promised that Solomon would succeed him, and having been convinced/reminded,⁴ David arranges for Solomon's immediate coronation. Solomon rides David's mule in procession through the city, Zadok anoints him king, and a mighty celebration ensues.

III. Adonijah and his guests hear the tumult of the city and, when informed of its source, flee in disarray. Adonijah seeks asylum by grabbing the horns of the altar and elicits an oath that Solomon will not kill him. Solomon magnanimously complies, stating, "If he shows himself worthy (lit. 'If he should be a son of valor'), none of his hairs will fall to the ground. But if evil is found in him, he will die" (1:52).

IV. Drawing ever nearer to death, David gives Solomon a final charge. He commences with a broad exhortation to be strong and follows with particulars. He adjures Solomon to take care of three pieces of unfinished business from his reign; he must deal with Joab for killing Abner and Amasa during David's reign, he must "deal faithfully" (2:7) with the progeny of Barzillai the Gileadite because of his

4. It is difficult to paraphrase this section of SN (particularly 1 Kgs 1:11–14) from a detached perspective because the author's intent remains obscure. One might interpret Bathsheba and Nathan's plan as a good-faith effort to implement David's plans conveyed to them earlier; alternatively one might interpret it as a calculating scheme to manipulate David's senility in order to undermine the presumptive heir and place their candidate on the throne. The author (deliberately?) left the interpretation ambiguous. I lean strongly towards the latter interpretation, as will become more apparent below.

steadfastness during David's flight from Absalom, and he must deal with Shimei the Benjaminite for cursing David.

V. The scene shifts back to Adonijah, who approaches Bathsheba with a request.⁵ Since he lost out on the kingdom, he desires only the hand of Abishag the Shunammite, the virgin who cared for David in his infirmity, in marriage. Bathsheba translates the request to Solomon, who considers it an attempt to undermine him and, pursuant to his declaration in 1 Kgs 1:52, calls for his execution. He bids Benaiah to carry out the punishment and Benaiah does so.

VI. Joab hears of Adonijah's fate and himself grabs the horns of the altar for asylum. Solomon dispatches Benaiah to execute him, but Joab refuses to leave the sanctuary of the sacred precinct, stating that Benaiah must kill him there. Unsure how to respond, Benaiah returns to Solomon and receives instructions to proceed with the execution. Benaiah obliges, eliminating Joab and taking his office as commander of the army.

VII. Solomon then summons Shimei and places him under house arrest in Jerusalem; Shimei accepts the just decision and agrees to obey. Three years later, however, two of his slaves flee to Gath and he follows and retrieves them. Solomon learns of this foray, reminds Shimei of his oath not to leave, and has Benaiah execute him. The narrative concludes with the summary, "And the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon" (2:46).⁶

6.2.2 Source Criticism of the Succession Narrative

"Succession Narrative" (SN) most commonly refers to the complex of texts in 2 Sam 9–20 and 1 Kgs 1–2, which, according to the well-known hypothesis of Leonhard Rost, constituted an independent source that was included in the greater biblical narrative by the Deuteronomistic Historian. I discuss the aftermath of Rost's hypothesis (published in 1926) in §5.2.2 and I will not repeat that discussion

5. Several commentators have suggested that 1 Kgs 2:13–25* naturally follows 1 Kgs 1:49–53 and consider 1 Kgs 2:1–12 an insertion in its entirety, but this seems uncalled for. At the end of the early passage Solomon orders Adonijah, "Go to your home" (1 Kgs 1:53), but in 1 Kgs 2:13 he "came to Bathsheba." The latter episode is geographically ambiguous, but unless Bathsheba frequented Adonijah's home, which does not seem likely, it does not seem to provide an immediate sequel.

6. Ishida translates "by the hand of Solomon" (1987, 180–81), which is defensible. This is an intriguing idea that changes the entire tone of 1 Kgs 2. I retain the traditional translation "in the hand of Solomon" because this seems more in line with the underlying message that Solomon did not go out of his way to eliminate enemies, but rather they received their just deserts. Ishida's translation follows his understanding that 1 Kgs 1–2 concludes the story begun in 2 Sam 9–20, and thus Solomon's harsh actions at the outset of his rule are presented favorably in contrast to David's weakness that resulted in multiple rebellions. I consider this contrast more an accident of the structure imposed upon this unit by Rost and his followers than a deliberate motif of the apologist (*contra* McCarter 1981, 364–67).

here. I should, however, state here that my use of the term SN does not conform to the classical conception. When referring to my own work, SN signifies only 1 Kgs 1–2*.

The reasons for this are manifold and have been recognized by several previous scholars. Perhaps most saliently, Solomon is almost entirely absent from 2 Sam 9–20. His birth is recorded in 2 Sam 12:24–25; elsewhere this passage revolves entirely around his father and brothers. It is, therefore, difficult to justify Rost's declaration that all of 2 Sam 9–20; 1 Kgs 1–2 "was written despite everything else 'in majorem gloriam Salomonis'—to the greater glory of Solomon" (1982, 105). David is the focus of 2 Sam 9–20⁷—David's interaction with Merib-Baal, David's sin with Bathsheba, David's response to the rebellion led by his son, and David's restoration of unity between Judah and Israel in the wake of Absalom's death and during Sheba's rebellion. As §5.4 shows, the narrative, especially in its oldest strata, focuses on events whose exigence can be found in the time of David. The scene shifts in 1 Kgs 1–2. These chapters provide the story of Solomon's succession to David's throne. The focus of these chapters is Solomon; David appears only in a supporting role as the narrative demands.⁸ Only when the introductory verse presents David as old and infirm does the audience confront the question that, according to Rost, governed SN in its entirety: "Who will sit on David's throne?" (Rost 1982, 89).⁹ Gone are the concerns of justifying David's treatment of the Saulides and legitimating him as ruler of both Judah and Israel. In these two chapters, and not until these two chapters, is the narrative concerned with the successor of David.

Reading 2 Sam 9–20 and 1 Kgs 1–2 in concert confirms this. In the latter two chapters, several references to the narrative in Samuel appear (cf. McCarter 1981, 361–62). Such references are entirely unidirectional, however; 2 Sam 9–20 does not anticipate the Solomonic material at all. Some of the main characters in 1 Kgs 1–2 (particularly Adonijah and Benaiah, but also Nathan and Bathsheba if one attributes 2 Sam 11–12 to a later stratum, as I do) are never introduced in 2 Sam 9–20, and those who are introduced have their stories told with an air of finality that does not leave the audience expecting anything further. The author(s) of

7. The lone exception to this is 2 Sam 13–14, in which Absalom plays the central role.

8. I deliberately title this chapter "The Succession Narrative of Solomon" to point toward this. When a genitive is attached to "Succession Narrative," it tends to be David, which I find misleading. Rost originally dubbed the text *die Thronnachfolge Davids* (literally "the throne succession of David") on account of his view of the overarching question, "Who will sit on David's throne?" (Rost 1982, 89). When one modifies this according to Thornton's sound suggestion ("Why was it Solomon who succeeded David to the throne?" [1968, 160]) the title should likewise be modified. Hutton also realized this; he uses the moniker "Solomonic Succession Narrative." Should anyone ever translate my work into German, I humbly request *Die Erbfolgegeschichte Salomos* for this chapter heading.

9. That said, I follow Thornton that the more appropriate question to be answered in SN is, "Why was it Solomon who succeeded David to the throne?" (1968, 160).

2 Sam 9–20 provides no hint of David’s lingering resentment of Joab and Shimei, which is so foundational to Solomon’s apologist. In every way 1 Kgs 1–2 has the feel of a sequel, not a conclusion, to the narrative in 2 Samuel.¹⁰

We are thus justified in treating 1 Kgs 1–2 independently of the preceding narrative. Since 1 Kgs 3 ushers in a new phase in Solomon’s reign beyond his questionable accession and with no apparent apologetic function, we may also treat these chapters separately from the following material. The task here, then, is to examine the composition history of this unit. Unlike TDRR, 1 Kgs 1–2 does not present a gallimaufry of discrete units of text that demand individual examination. But like TDRR, these chapters betray some later additions that must be removed to reveal the Solomonic text. Afterward, we will examine the presence of anti-Solomonic polemic within 1 Kgs 1–2, an issue unique to this text among those under investigation in this study.

When isolating Deuteronomistic redactional material from the underlying story of Solomon’s succession, it will be useful to divide the text into three sections: 1 Kgs 1:1–53, 2:1–12, and 2:13–46. The first of these sections betrays the fewest signs of Deuteronomism. Indeed, Rost considered 1 Kgs 1 entirely free of secondary additions (1982, 87) and was followed in this by others (McCarter 1981, 360 n. 12). But this seems to go slightly too far. Veijola (1975, 16–18, 26–27; followed in large part by Langlamet 1976b, 486–500) detects seams in the narrative in vv. 30, 35–37, 46–48, all of which deal with the theme of David’s oath to Bathsheba and the hope that Solomon’s fame will surpass his father’s. In addition to dealing with the theme of the Davidic dynasty emphasized in such Deuteronomistic passages as 2 Sam 7,¹¹ these verses (especially vv. 35, 48) exhibit characteristic Deuteronomistic phraseology.¹² These are also connected by the language that Solomon will

10. For an alternative argument for reading 1 Kgs 1–2 separately from the material in 2 Sam, see Keys 1996, 54–70.

11. Here Mettinger’s recent study on 2 Sam 7 (2008) could impact our understanding of SN. Utilizing a methodology similar to my own, Mettinger dates the base text of 2 Sam 7 to the time of Solomon on account of its rhetorical situation. He vacillates regarding whether the promise of a Davidic dynasty was an original (Solomonic) part of that text.

12. David says that Solomon “will sit on my throne” (יָשֵׁב עַל-כִּסֵּאִי, 1 Kgs 1:35), which is a variation of the common Deuteronomistic phrase יָשֵׁב עַל כִּסֵּא דָוִד (see Weinfeld 1972, 355 IX.6). Weinfeld omits this verse from his appendix, but I suspect this is an oversight caused by the first-person perspective here since the words come from the mouth of David himself. Weinfeld does include a Deuteronomistic expression from the latter part of v. 35 in his appendix: וְאַתָּה צִוִּיתִי לֵהָיִית נָגִיד עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל (1972, 355 IX.9).

Although nothing obviously Deuteronomistic appears in vv. 46–47, these are clearly connected with v. 48, which betrays clear Deuteronomism. Again we see the expression that Solomon “sits on my throne” (יָשֵׁב עַל-כִּסֵּאִי) in the mouth of David, and the verse ends with the well-attested phrase “my eyes have seen” (וְעֵינַי רָאוּת). Again Weinfeld omits this from his appendix (1972, 357 X.11) apparently because of a difference in person—the customary Deuteronomistic expression is “your eyes have seen”—but it surely belongs.

reign “in place of” (תחת, vv. 30, 35) David instead of the typical expression that Solomon will reign “after” (אחר) David. I attribute these verses (specifically vv. 30aβ, 35aβb–37, 46–48)¹³ to the Deuteronomist also. This is not entirely certain (except perhaps in the case of v. 48, which Veijola justifiably describes as “unverkennbar dtr” [1975, 27]; this is recognized also by Knoppers [1993, 64], who adopts a fairly minimalist approach to Deuteronomistic editing in these chapters), but seems probable. In sum, then, for this section I retain the following as part of SN: 1 Kgs 1:1–30aa, 30b–35aa, 38–45, 49–53.

The following section (1 Kgs 2:1–12) opens with David’s deathbed charge to Solomon (vv. 1–9). The phenomenon of the charge itself in no way demands a Deuteronomistic author; such charges appear elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible (cf. Gen 49:29–33) and seem to represent a broader motif (Rogers 1988, 407). Thus the introduction of the charge (v. 1) may be retained. Within the charge, vv. 3–4 epitomize Deuteronomistic language and are rightly identified as redactional by virtually all commentators.¹⁴ The intervening v. 2 is often included with the interpolation of the following two verses, but Rogers points out that the language of this verse actually diverges from the Deuteronomistic phraseology normally used in exhortations to “be strong” (1988, 407–9). Moreover, v. 5 naturally follows v. 2. Rogers therefore suggests that v. 2 should be retained as part of the stock narrative, explaining its common identification as Deuteronomistic as follows: “The confusion over the origin of 1 Kgs 2:2 has arisen because the obvious insertion in vv 3–4 has cast a deuteronomistic pall on the similar, yet predeuteronomistic terminology in v 2” (1988, 409). His analysis is persuasive and I follow it here. The rest of the charge (vv. 5–9)¹⁵ exhibits no sign of Deuteronomism and appears to consti-

13. This follows Veijola, who does not attribute the entirety of these verses to the Deuteronomist but states that this series of verses “spätere Zusätze enthält” (1975, 18).

14. Weinfeld identifies no fewer than eight Deuteronomistic expressions in these two verses: (ושמרת את-משמרת יהוה, ללכת בדרכי, לשמור חקתי ומצותיו ומשפטיו ועדותיו, ככתוב) בתורת משה, למען תשכיל את כל-אשר תעשה, למען יקים יהוה את-דברו אשר דבר עלי, ללכת לפני באמת בכל-לבבם ובכל-נפשם, לא-יכרת לך איש מעל כסא ישראל (Weinfeld 1972, 333 V.6, 334 V.8–9, 335 V.14, 336 V.16 and 338 V.21f, 339 V.24, 346 VII.6, 350 VIII.A.1, 355 IX.8).

15. Nearly everyone treats the entire testament as a unit. It deserves comment, however, that the instruction about Barzillai in 1 Kgs 2:7 contrasts somewhat with the surrounding instructions about Joab and Shimei (1 Kgs 2:5–6, 8–9). Noting this, Langlamet suggests that perhaps the Barzillai notice was a late addition to the testament (“Deux solutions restent donc actuellement possibles : ou le v. 7 appartient à la rédaction prosalomonienne ou il est postérieur à cette rédaction” [1976b, 504]). He does not note, however, perhaps the strongest argument in favor of the Barzillai instruction being later than the surrounding material—the fact that descendants of this same Barzillai the Gileadite are mentioned in the Persian-period lists of returned exiles (Ezra 2:61 // Neh 7:63). I treat 1 Kgs 2:7 as authentic, but with some hesitation. This could be a later supplement in the interest of “negotiating belonging” (to adopt Jacob Wright’s terminology) among returnees of the *gōlā* and the inhabitants of the land.

tute the authentic Davidic testament (cf. Barton 2004, 103).¹⁶ Finally, vv. 11–12 represent typical editorial notices and require no elaboration to be identified as Deuteronomistic;¹⁷ v. 10 employs common Deuteronomistic phraseology but is retained by many commentators since without it the text conspicuously lacks a notice of David's death.¹⁸ I tentatively omit this verse, though I take no stance as to whether an earlier stratum of SN conveyed the news of David's death (which was then removed by a later editor to avoid an incongruous doublet) or not. In sum, then, for this section I retain the following as part of SN: 1 Kgs 2:1–2, 5–9.

For the final section (1 Kgs 2:13–46), the Deuteronomist seems to have inserted a series of thematically similar interpolations in the descriptions of Solomon's elimination of his enemies. The interpolations are linked by references to "my father David" (vv. 24, 26, 32, 44; elsewhere absent from the text), an emphasis on retributive justice (vv. 24, 32–33, 44), and a preoccupation with the divine promise to the Davidic dynasty (vv. 24, 33, 45; for the latter point see Knoppers 1993, 65). These interpolations are easily identifiable, especially since two form incongruous doublets with the preceding material (vv. 24, 44–45). The only question involves the limits of each expansion. In the Adonijah and Shimei narratives, the redactional material is easily confined to v. 24 and vv. 44–45, respectively. The limits of the Joab expansion are more difficult to discern. I attribute vv. 32–33 to the Deuteronomist. Others include v. 31b in this due to the reference to bloodguilt (see Rogers 1988, 401); this may be correct, but the language here seems to be slightly different and including v. 31b with vv. 32–33

16. There may be two exceptions to this. Both v. 6b and v. 9b may be later (not necessarily Deuteronomistic) additions. In both these verses David discreetly intimates that Solomon should dispose of his enemy then subsequently gives explicit instructions to kill him; it seems that a later glossator considered David's original words overly ambiguous and wanted to leave no doubt in the audience's mind that David had in fact ordered Solomon accordingly. I have not come across other scholars who acknowledge this inconcinnity, though it seems to lie behind McCarter's tentative attribution of the first half of both these verses to the Deuteronomist (1981, 360 n. 12). He does not expound his reasoning, but I surmise that the mentions of wisdom in vv. 6a, 9a lead him to link this with the Deuteronomistic image of Solomon. This is feasible, but while the conclusions to both verses seem like explicative glosses, I can find no occasion for the insertion of vv. 6a, 9a. Thus, if my suspicion about these two verses is correct, the italicized portions of the following would constitute glosses: "Act according to your wisdom, *and do not let his gray head go down to Sheol in peace*" (1 Kgs 2:6); "Now, do not hold him innocent, for you are a wise man and you know what you should do to him. *Bring his gray head down to Sheol with blood*" (1 Kgs 2:9). The second of these glosses seems particularly ill fitting in light of the conclusion of the Shimei story.

17. With the possible exception of v. 12b, but since this seems to demand v. 12a (and does not follow v. 9 naturally), I consider it part of this Deuteronomistic interpolation.

18. For discussion of 1 Kgs 2:10–12 see Rogers 1988, 410–12, though Rogers (after expressing some ambivalence) considers v. 10 part of the pre-Deuteronomistic stock narrative.

results in a rather repetitive expansion.¹⁹ Following Rogers (1988, 403–5), I consider the brief Abiathar account to be an interpolation of the Deuteronomist in its entirety. Nearly all scholars identify v. 27 as Deuteronomistic because of its direct fulfillment of the prophecy related in 1 Sam 2:27–36, often suspected as a *vaticinium ex eventu*.²⁰ But v. 26 presents its own problems, most saliently the fact that v. 28 (the introduction to the Joab episode) is clearly meant to follow v. 25 (the conclusion of the Adonijah episode). It thus appears that the consequences of Abiathar's participation in Adonijah's putative coup were not reported in the earliest narrative.²¹ In sum, then, for this section I retain the following as part of SN: 1 Kgs 2:13–23, 25, 28–31, 34–43, 46.²²

This leaves the outline of SN in its entirety:

Table 7. The Earliest Text of the Succession Narrative

SN = 1 Kgs 1–2*	Deuteronomistic (or other) additions
1 Kgs 1:1–30aa, 30b–35aa, 38–45, 49–53; 2:1–2, 5–9, 13–23, 25, 28–31, 34–43, 46	1 Kgs 1:30aβ, 35aβb–37, 46–48; 2:3–4, 10–12, 24, 26–27, 32–33, 44–45

6.2.3 For Solomon, Against Solomon, or Both?

This understanding of the composition history of 1 Kgs 1–2 is in line with the scholarly consensus (such as there is), though many scholars would contend with some of the finer points of my breakdown. But this is a significant improvement over TDRR, for which there is no clear majority opinion concerning even the broad outlines of composition history. This model for SN does leave a few questions open, however, the most urgent of which we will examine here. A close—and

19. Rogers also calls attention to the oft-overlooked point that the language of bloodguilt in 1 Kgs 2:32–33 directly contradicts the earlier story of the slaying of Abner in 2 Sam 3 (1988, 401–3). Immediately after Joab's bloody deed, David declares, "I and my kingdom are innocent before Yahweh forever of the blood of Abner son of Ner" (2 Sam 3:28). In 1 Kgs 2:31, however, Solomon instructs Benaiah to kill Joab "so that you will remove the blood that Joab shed without cause from me and from my house." These two passages must come from separate traditions.

20. Note also the presence of the Deuteronomistic expression *למלא את-דבר יהוה* in 1 Kgs 2:27 (Weinfeld 1972, 350 VIII.A.2).

21. It may follow that other references to Abiathar in 1 Kgs 2 are also secondary, but I tentatively retain them.

22. Some scholars also identify Adonijah's enigmatic recognition that "the kingdom was his [Solomon's] from Yahweh" (1 Kgs 2:15b) and the final notice that "the kingdom was established in Solomon's hand" (1 Kgs 2:46b) as Deuteronomistic. Again, both of these identifications are feasible but we lack sufficient evidence to conclude this with certainty, so I tentatively retain the two half verses. Regarding 1 Kgs 2:15b, see Rogers 1988, 400 n. 4.

perhaps even not-so-close—reading of the entire narrative reveals some startling incongruities. Although unabashedly apologetic, SN includes some decidedly ambiguous material which one need not strain to construe as anti-Solomonic. Consider, for example, the following two points:

- (1) In 1 Kgs 1:11–27, Nathan and Bathsheba seem to collude to deceive a somewhat senile David into appointing Solomon as his successor. The narrator does not directly accuse them of duping their sovereign, but a straightforward reading of the text suggests this interpretation. The nature of this narrative—which, in the absence of any hint of divine election in SN, should provide the firmest foundation of Solomon’s legitimacy—instead of verifying David’s appointment of Solomon, casts aspersions on it.²³
- (2) In 1 Kgs 2:28–35*, Joab fears for his life and flees to the tabernacle, where he grabs the horns of the altar to claim asylum. Solomon’s trusty hatchet man Benaiah finds Joab there and, having been charged with disposing of him, calls him to come out. When Joab sagely refuses, Benaiah becomes perplexed at how to proceed and returns to Solomon for further instructions. Killing someone at the altar was forbidden—in cases of bloodguilt where a murderer had to be executed, they were first to be taken from the altar and then put to death (Exod 21:12–14).²⁴ Solomon flagrantly disregards this stipulation, ordering Benaiah to finish the job without concern for Joab’s whereabouts. The narrator depicts Solomon as ruthless and impious, even less inhibited by propriety than the murderous Benaiah.

These are the two most blatant subversive elements in SN, but one can point to an array of similar, but more minor, features that further suggest an author not

23. I discuss this at more length in my remarks on Solomon’s legitimization in §6.3. For more on this issue, see Seibert 2006, 126–28.

24. Although this explicit text may not have been known by the author of SN, the principle clearly held—hence Benaiah’s initial hesitation. One can only speculate why Benaiah did not forcibly remove Joab first (perhaps to highlight Solomon’s disregard for the altar?). Some suggest that Joab’s response to Benaiah, “No, for I will die here” (1 Kgs 2:30), supersedes the rules of asylum and permits Benaiah to kill him there. Seibert argues persuasively against this idea: “Joab’s brief exchange with Benaiah in v. 30 in which he says, ‘I will die here’ hardly justifies Solomon’s ‘do as he says’ attitude. It is unbelievable that Joab was inviting his own execution especially within such sacred precincts! His words—if they really were his words—were surely not intended as a self-pronounced death sentence. People fled to the sanctuary to escape death not seek it! Instead, Joab’s response appears to be an attempt to broker some kind of agreement with him, since he thought (hoped!) Solomon would not defile the sanctuary by ordering an execution at the altar. Unfortunately for Joab, Solomon had different ideas” (2006, 148). On top of this, one could note that Benaiah hesitates even after Joab’s response, so he did not interpret Joab’s statement in this way.

entirely enamored with his protagonist.²⁵ This creates a significant tension within the text. The narrative exculpates Solomon from every murder, but simultaneously sows seeds of doubt regarding its own veracity. This has been recognized by several scholars, though many only observe the phenomenon without attempting to explain it.²⁶ A few explanations have been proposed, however, and we will turn to them now.

In the 1970s a trio of European scholars proposed the idea that the Succession Narrative (as defined by Rost) was originally composed as an anti-Solomonic (and anti-Davidic) work that a much later pro-monarchic editor revised in an apologetic way. Though each advocated this fundamental premise, they differed on points such as when the favorable redaction occurred and what passages exactly constitute the Succession Narrative. Ernst Würthwein (1974) argued that the Succession Narrative as defined by Rost is the product of two stages, separated by several centuries and presenting opposite viewpoints.²⁷ The earlier stratum derived from Solomon's contemporaries but, *contra* Rost, opposed David and Solomon and portrayed them negatively (1974, 49–59). Only much later was this hostile narrative edited in a way that (at least partially) redeemed the famous kings of Israel.²⁸ In addition to a “Davidfreundliche und joabfeindliche Überarbeitung” (1974, 43–47) and other moralizing accretions (1974, 19–42) running through much of 2 Samuel, Würthwein attributed 1 Kgs 2:5–9, 31b–33, 44–45 to a later author attempting to exonerate Solomon (1974, 11–17). Shortly thereafter, Timo Veijola (1975) subjected much of 1–2 Sam and 1 Kgs 1–2 to a redaction-critical analysis that

25. Seibert marshals the evidence well in his monograph (2006, 111–57); I discuss his explanation below.

26. See, for example, the scholars cited by Seibert (2006, 156). Cogan suggests (in regard to 1 Kgs 1 specifically) that the narrative tension is not inherent to the text but a figment of modern scholars' perception. He argues that the biblical authors were not averse to “describing the wily ways of heroes,” pointing to the Jacob story as a parallel (2000, 167). This seems oversimplistic, however; the Jacob story stems from an entirely different milieu with a different purpose. With the exigence of establishing a king's legitimacy, wiliness is not the ideal characteristic to emphasize.

27. Würthwein built on the seminal work of Delekat (1967), who proposed that at least three sections of the more-broadly defined Succession Narrative (the Bathsheba Narrative, the Absalom revolt, and Solomon's accession) were anti-Davidic, anti-Solomonic, and even anti-Yahwistic (“Freilich ist, wo der Erzähler nach der Stellung Yahwes zur Davidgeschichte fragt, überall zugleich ein untergründiger Groll des Erzählers gegen Jahwe unverkennbar”; 1967, 34). What separates Delekat from his successors is that he did not attempt to explain the positive elements toward David and Solomon in these passages.

28. Würthwein was frustratingly unforthcoming about the date of the pro-Solomonic/pro-Davidic stratum in his 1974 essay. In a later commentary on 1 Kings he seemed to attribute this stratum to the Deuteronomist, who exhibits “ungebrochene Bewunderung Salomos” (Würthwein 1977, 1), but he also allowed for some post-Deuteronomistic activity (or the activity of a later Deuteronomistic writer such as DtrP; cf. Hutton 2009, 212).

produced comparable results.²⁹ Though he refrained from commenting at length on the stance of the original composition, he attributed many of the exonerating elements of 1 Kgs 1–2 (and earlier passages in TDRR) to the Deuteronomist(s).³⁰ François Langlamet (1976a, 1976b) essentially combined the *Tendenz*-critical approach of Würthwein with the source-critical approach of Veijola to provide the most thorough investigation of the Succession Narrative built on the premise of an original anti-Solomonic stratum. Following Flanagan (see §5.2.2), Langlamet treated 1 Kgs 1–2 separately from the rest of the Succession Narrative as defined by Rost (Langlamet 1976a, 347–48); his breakdown of the underlying stratum of these chapters corresponds fairly closely with my own, outlined above.³¹ Unlike me, however, Langlamet argued that this stratum could not be read as favorable to Solomon: “Le récit « primitif », ainsi restitué, ne peut être considéré comme une apologie du Salomon : sa « tendance » antisalomonienne est indéniable” (1976a, 347). He instead saw it as the product of a faction that had favored Adonijah: “Partisan d’Adonias, meurtri par des événements récents, il attaque sournoisement Natan, Bethsabée, Benayahû, Salomon lui-même, en retournant contre ses adversaires des arguments qui leur étaient familiers” (1976b, 525). The later pro-Solomonic redaction came in the late Judahite monarchy, during the reign of Hezekiah or Josiah (1976b, 527–28).³² This redactional model of Würthwein, Veijola,

29. Veijola’s study had a rather different character than those of Delekat and Würthwein in that it largely ignored the issue of *Tendenz*, which was fundamental to the other two. In fact, Veijola’s history of scholarship on the Succession Narrative (1975, 5–15) mentions neither of these works.

30. I deal with his analysis of 1 Kgs 1 above. Overall, for these two chapters Veijola attributes the following to later editors: 1 Kgs 1:30aß, 35aßb–37, 46–48; 2:1–12, 24, 26b–27, 31b–33, 37b, 42a*, 43a*, 44–45 (1975, 16–30). Most of this belongs to his DtrG, though he attributes some portions to a later Deuteronomistic layer and a post-Deuteronomistic layer (see esp. Veijola 1975, 23).

31. Langlamet’s determination of secondary material in 1 Kgs 1–2 is extremely meticulous; this has obvious advantages but also leads him to perform extensive surgery on the text, excising a multitude of partial verses and brief phrases from the base text. While his breakdown resembles my own in substance, he eliminates from the original stratum several more minor snippets of text than I do. For his precise breakdown, see Langlamet 1976b, 524–25.

32. Langlamet’s pro-Solomonic redaction consists of essentially the same elements that Veijola (and I) attribute to the Deuteronomist; Langlamet himself only attributes 1 Kgs 2:2–4, 5aα, 11 to the Deuteronomist (1976b, 525). Thus even though I do not consider Solomon’s apology to have a divine focus, to Langlamet the “apologie” is primarily what I consider Deuteronomistic additions, so that I can concur with Langlamet’s assessment that “C’est une apologie de Salomon et des partisans, mais une apologie très « théorique », beaucoup plus préoccupée de morale et de théologie que d’actualité politique” (1976b, 528).

and Langlamet continues to influence European scholarship particularly, as can be seen in the synopsis by Seiler (1998, 13–19).³³

While such redactional theories gained traction in European scholarship, in North America scholars tended to follow the response of Kyle McCarter, who argued that such narrative tension is an innate characteristic of apologetic. Responding to Delekat, Würthwein, Veijola, and Langlamet, McCarter wrote,

The alleged redactional activity was, they say, designed to impose a favorable view of David and Solomon on an older text. But much of the evidence they cite vanishes when the narrative is read as apologetic. Apologetic writing presents unfavorable circumstances forthrightly in order to cast a favorable light on them by a variety of literary means. By its very nature, then, it holds conflicting ideas in literary tension. The elimination of the literary blandishments of the author by appeal to higher critical or other considerations, therefore, will inevitably produce a recital of unfavorable circumstances, but it will also distort the writer's intended product beyond recovery. It is a mistake to rely too heavily on the criterion of narrative tension for identifying redactional material in these stories, when such tension is the very essence of the writer's technique. (McCarter 1981, 360 n. 12)

McCarter's criticism here is valid. I would also add that the model of an anti-Solomonic stratum that was later revised by a pro-Solomonic author has another significant drawback: While focusing entirely on the negative side of the tension in 1 Kgs 1–2, it overlooks some aspects of the positive side. Upon close inspection, the strata of SN proposed by Würthwein, Veijola, and Langlamet on the one hand and McCarter on the other are not very different, and my own interpretation falls approximately in the middle.³⁴ The pro-Solomonic stratum of the former three barely qualifies as a redaction; it resembles more a series of glosses (which Veijola [and Würthwein?] and I would label Deuteronomistic and Langlamet would label secondary, though not Deuteronomistic). This being the case, one struggles to grasp how proponents of the redactional model explain the story of Adonijah's request for Abishag, which justifies Solomon's execution of him (even if it does so somewhat ham-fistedly), or the story of Shimei's violation of his restraining order,

33. Seiler includes in his summary some successive scholarship in this vein that I did not have access to (see Seiler 1998, 17–19).

34. The major exception to this is that McCarter and I both include the testament of David (1 Kgs 2:5–9) in the underlying stratum while Würthwein, Veijola, and Langlamet all treat this unit as secondary (Würthwein 1974, 16; Veijola 1975, 19–20; Langlamet 1976b, 502–5). The testament to some extent constitutes the crux of the issue, since it provides the justification for Joab's execution, which is crucial to the apology, and (part of) the justification for Shimei's execution.

which justifies Solomon's execution of him also.³⁵ I contend that the pro- and anti-Solomonic material in SN is an inextricable part of the narrative, and cannot be adequately explained by appeal to different layers.

But McCarter's solution has its own problems. His attribution of all the narrative tension to a text's apologetic character quite sensibly explains the tension within TDRR—including those portions of TDRR that comprise the majority of Rost's Succession Narrative, namely, 2 Sam 9–20—but I find it difficult to uphold in 1 Kgs 1–2*. As McCarter points out, apologetic involves narrative tension because the heroes of the stories often appear in dubious situations, but such tension is always necessary. David's apologist could not address the charges of his employment with the Philistines or his implication in Abner's death without acknowledging that David did meet Achish and Abner did perish near Hebron. But in Solomon's apology the narrative includes unnecessary tensions. The apologist has no apparent reason to portray David's appointment of Solomon as heir as the product of a deception born of Nathan and Bathsheba's goal of self-preservation, neither must he relate Solomon's explicit orders to kill Joab in the sacred precinct.³⁶ Put differently, whereas in the other apologies the accusations become clear only when the reader approaches the text with a hermeneutic of suspicion, SN seems to have a built-in hermeneutic of suspicion, provided by the ancient author.³⁷ The main purpose of the apology is to demonstrate that Solomon ordered the various executions not as a matter of political expediency but in response to individual crimes that all warranted a death sentence. Yet the apologist still hints at a political motivation underlying all of these deeds (1 Kgs 2:22, 28).

In an effort to preserve the unity of 1 Kgs 1–2* while acknowledging that the tension within the passage runs deeper than can be explained by appeal to its apologetic mode, Eric Seibert suggests that the best explanation is that of subversive scribal activity.³⁸ After examining the nature and techniques of subversion present

35. The latter part of this does not apply to Langlamet, who asserts that the Shimei story is not part of the Succession Narrative, but a secondary appendix (1976b, 518–21). This point is supported text critically by Pennoyer, who posits an "Independent Shimei Account" (IŠA) comprising 1 Kgs 2:35l–o (part of a plus in LXX), 36–46a (1993, 43–53). But unlike Langlamet, Pennoyer places the IŠA early in Solomon's reign, thus almost immediately after the rest of SN (1993, 53).

36. Contrast this with David's apology, wherein the apologist redirects suspicions about David's involvement entirely onto Joab in the murders of Abner, Absalom, and Amasa. Each time, Joab acted alone and for his own reasons.

37. Moreover, if the positive elements stem from a later redaction, this redactor did a sloppy job since the *textus receptus* still reflects so dubiously on Solomon.

38. Seibert also includes a portion of the above quotation of McCarter and concludes, "Surely McCarter is right" (Seibert 2006, 107). This is somewhat confusing because his own position differs from McCarter's rather markedly, at least in regard to 1 Kgs 1–2*. The point of departure between the two can be found in Seibert's distinction between "submissive" and

within the Hebrew Bible (2006, 3–94), Seibert investigates this phenomenon using 1 Kgs 1–2 as a test case. What sets him apart from advocates of the redaction-critical school is that he views the subversion as originating in Solomon’s court, from the scribes tasked with promoting him: “I would conclude that 1 Kgs 1–2 was written—at least in part—by (a) subversive scribe(s) who was/were commissioned to produce a piece of political propaganda but who, in the process of completing that assignment, took the liberty to inscribe his/their own subtle critique of the king” (2006, 157).³⁹ Thus Solomon’s scribes were compelled by their sovereign to write a favorable account, but compelled by their own convictions to conceal subversive elements within the same. The result is an ostensible apology, but one with many embedded misgivings. Such an idea is intriguing and not untenable, but remains almost entirely unprovable.⁴⁰

There is no obvious explanation of the source of the simultaneously pro- and anti-Solomonic polemic evident within SN.⁴¹ I remain unpersuaded by those who resolve the issues by positing entire strata that are exclusively sympathetic or hostile to David, because the putative strata cannot be sufficiently disentangled. Moreover, the ambiguity seems inherent to the text; even most aspects of the apology seem ambivalent toward Solomon (see §6.3 below). Seibert may provide the most viable alternative explanation, though it seems somewhat far-fetched on the surface. At this point I take no strong position on the issue, but I attempt to take it into account throughout my apologetic analysis.

6.3 APOLOGETIC ANALYSIS

Two aspects of SN render it unique among ancient Near Eastern apologies. The first is that it avoids outright denial. Whereas other rulers tended to provide ac-

“subversive” scribes (2006, 61–65). He identifies both types of scribe as “tethered,” that is, writing under the auspices of an institution (in this case, the palace), but a submissive scribe is essentially a Tory while a subversive scribe is dissatisfied with his superiors. According to this terminology, McCarter would attribute 1 Kgs 1–2* to submissive scribes, but Seibert would attribute the passage to subversive scribes.

39. This closely resembles the plot of Stefan Heym’s historical-fiction novel, *The King David Report*. One cannot help but wonder if that story provided any impetus for Seibert’s research.

40. Seibert anticipates this and includes a section on how to detect intentional subversion (2006, 86–92). As he admits, though, many passages remain ambiguous and one can typically only suggest that intentional subversion might, not must, be present. This is readily apparent in one of his guidelines for detecting subversion, “the lack of more compelling explanations for mutually contradictory readings” (2006, 90–91)—a method that amounts to “if all other methods of interpretation fail to convince, perhaps one should consider subversive scribal activity.”

41. For other takes on this issue, see the discussion in Barton 2004, 99–100.

counts of events that precluded their involvement in certain nefarious deeds,⁴² here the apologist admits, even celebrates, Solomon's involvement in every case. The rhetoric is almost without exception transformative, alerting the audience to new information that justifies Solomon's actions. The only other apology that at all resembles SN in this respect is the Autobiography of Hattusili III, wherein Hattusili accepts responsibility for displacing Urhi-Tessup and Arma-Tarhunta but explains why such actions were acceptable. This commonality makes sense since the events surrounding the accessions of Solomon and Hattusili seem to have been the most public of those under investigation, so that knowledge of the steps they took to achieve their thrones was difficult to suppress. But the second conspicuous feature of SN provides a stark contrast to Hattusili's Autobiography. While Hattusili's apology might justifiably be called a masterpiece of apologetic rhetoric, Solomon's apology earns no such distinction. Not only has SN failed to convince many scholars of Solomon's innocence, its presentation of the events that brought Solomon to the throne is so ambiguous that several scholars have speculated that the text was originally composed as anti-Solomonic propaganda (see §6.2.3 above). I do not accept this interpretation because on another level SN is transparently apologetic, listing Solomon's dead enemies one by one and explaining why each execution was appropriate.⁴³ But the ambiguity so suffuses the text that one struggles to understand the apologist's intent. This is particularly the case regarding the legitimization of Solomon, to which we will turn now.

Solomon's legitimization? The most ambiguous section of SN concerns David's designation of Solomon as his successor. After relating Adonijah's feast to the reader, the author shifts the scene to Nathan and Bathsheba and we read the following:

And Nathan said to Bathsheba, mother of Solomon, "Have you not heard that Adonijah, son of Haggith, rules, and our lord David does not know? Now, come, and I will counsel you (to) deliver your life and the life of your son Solomon. Go and enter in to King David and say to him, 'Did you not, my lord the king, swear to your maidservant, "For Solomon your son will rule after me, and he will sit on my throne"? Then why does Adonijah rule?' While you are still speaking there with the king, I will enter after you and I will confirm your words." (1 Kgs 1:11–14)

Although it is not overtly stated, the narrator seems to imply that with their lives endangered by the new king, Nathan and Bathsheba plan a coup to place their

42. Telipinu was off on campaign when Huzziya and his brothers were murdered, David was raiding Amalekites in the south when the Philistines killed Saul, etc.

43. Recalling the distinction between legitimization and justification outlined in §1.4.5, the justifications of particular misdeeds bear all the marks of apologetic, but as we shall see immediately below, the legitimization does not look like it would have satisfied Solomon's supporters, much less his detractors.

man on the throne instead.⁴⁴ They exploit Adonijah's absence and David's addled mental state⁴⁵ to obtain the imprimatur of the incumbent king. The tone here is distinctly conspiratorial; instead of reassuring the audience of the legitimacy of this maneuvering, the author reinforces the audience's suspicions. In his narrative commentary of 1 Kings, Walsh states, "The crucial question, of course, is whether David actually swore such an oath or whether it is a fabrication by Nathan designed to cozen the aged king. The conventions of Hebrew narrative would easily allow the narrator to make the situation clear. Yet there is no information here or elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible to answer the question one way or the other. That fact is itself significant: we are *meant* to wonder" (1996, 12).

Like every ruler in this study, Solomon assumed the throne during some sort of coup, but unlike the others, Solomon's apology does little to conceal it.⁴⁶ On top of this, although the apologist portrays Solomon's rival as arrogant and poor material for ruling a kingdom (see below), he does little to address the issue of Solomon's own legitimacy. The apology shows a lack of concern for utilizing the available stock of motifs to ground the new king's legitimacy.⁴⁷ The idea of divine election, which appears in every other apology from the ancient Near East and provides the most reliable means of legitimizing someone without the appropriate pedigree, is almost completely absent.⁴⁸ Royal prerogative appears in 1 Kgs

44. One historical desideratum of this episode is an understanding of the relationship of Solomon and Adonijah prior to Adonijah's "exalting himself" in 1 Kgs 1:5. Adonijah's actions in 1 Kgs 1:9–10 were not untoward if he was in fact the heir presumptive (see below). Contrary to Nathan's words in 1 Kgs 1:11 and 1:24–27 and Bathsheba's in 1 Kgs 1:17–21, Adonijah never actually becomes king; he only throws a great feast (cf. Seibert 2006, 119–20). Moreover, Adonijah later asserts that all Israel expected him to rule (1 Kgs 2:15), an assertion that the text never challenges. But if Adonijah did act forthrightly and observe the proper protocol, why did he exclude Solomon and other parties from the sacrifice at En Rogel? This suggests that two factions, one supporting Adonijah and one supporting Solomon, had already developed, but in any case one can only speculate on the specifics of the situation.

45. I interpret 1 Kgs 1:1–4 as deliberately portraying a physically and mentally enfeebled David, which serves in part to set up Nathan and Bathsheba's conspiracy. I acknowledge, however, that later in the story David's mental acuity seems suddenly restored, creating a confusing image of the geriatric sovereign overall. Provan writes, "Here we have the dying king, David, now out of touch with reality, now fully in control, with a curiously ambivalent attitude toward oaths and a selective memory" (1995b, 112).

46. One might interpret the apology as indicating that Solomon's coup is acceptable because it undid Adonijah's greater coup, but if so this is not explicit. See my discussion of the following charge also.

47. One could compare this to Telipinu's apology, but the many historical questions surrounding the latter render such a comparison difficult.

48. *Contra* Seibert (2006, 128–29). He cites three references to the divine election of Solomon in 1 Kgs 1–2, but two are almost certainly Deuteronomistic (1 Kgs 1:48; 2:24)

1:29–30*, 32–34, 43, but this all remains under the pall cast by the ambiguity of whether David ever sponsored Solomon while of sound mind. Of the triad of establishing legitimacy, only popular acclamation (which seems to be only the poor relation of divine election and royal prerogative) appears without qualification. We can only speculate on the reasoning for this. It could be that once Solomon's grip on the kingdom was secure, the naysayers were either removed or satisfied, so that his legitimacy no longer remained a significant point of contention (though if that were the case, one wonders why the apology would exist at all). It could be that Solomon's assumption of the throne was so indefensible, or the perception of his illegitimacy so ubiquitous, that the apologist did not attempt to defend it—if so, then the stress of Solomon's passivity would take on greater importance, distancing him from the unpleasant deeds.⁴⁹ It could be that modern readers misinterpret the text due to the erroneous assumptions we bring (see Cogan 2000, 167). In any event, Solomon's royal legitimation seems less emphatic than those of other rulers who gained the throne in atypical circumstances, if not entirely absent.

The lack of legitimation for Solomon is still more perplexing given the historical circumstances surrounding Solomon's accession. One struggles to find any basis on which to view Solomon as legitimate—he was not next in the line of succession, no divine oracle of which we are aware had expressed his election over David's (other) sons, and no (public) word had come from the king to suggest that he endorsed Solomon. Thus we might expect that Adonijah was the presumptive heir, and a critical reading of the apology supports this. Adonijah's feast was attended by several power players in the royal court, including David's sons. Later in the text he asserts, "You know that the kingdom was mine, and all Israel turned to me to rule" (1 Kgs 2:15), and neither the narrator nor Bathsheba (with whom he is conversing) contradict this assertion. In fact, according to the biblical narrative the scheme to enthrone Solomon succeeded purely due to the element of surprise, because Adonijah and all his supporters took it for granted that he was about to succeed his father. Ishida suggests, "In contrast to Solomon's faction, Adonijah's group of supporters certainly was the dominant party. It is entirely conceivable that they did not feel it necessary to prepare for an armed rebellion when they met at En Rogel" (1987, 175).

Solomon's SN, therefore, is perhaps the most one-dimensional apology from the ancient Near East. It mostly ignores the issue of Solomon's right to rule (legitimation), instead focusing on the accompanying issues of how he secured his rule

and the third (1 Kgs 2:15, the one reference to divine election in SN as I delimit it) may be secondary also. As Seibert notes, Solomon's divine election is emphasized in the later tradition of the Chronicler (cf. 1 Chr 22:7–10; Braun 1973, 506–7); it appears in other later traditions as well (cf. 1 Kgs 3:6–9).

49. "Solomon himself had nothing to do with the tawdry deceptions that brought him there [to the throne], or so the narrative wishes us to believe anyway" (Nelson 1987, 21). I borrow the use of this quote from Seibert 2006, 122.

without resorting to turpitude (justification). This was recognized by Thornton, the first scholar to deal explicitly with SN as apologetic, who described the situation that spawned SN as follows: “Adonijah’s attempt to gain the throne did not succeed, and shortly after David himself had died, Adonijah and Joab were executed, Abiathar was deprived of his office, and Solomon was on the throne. An unexpected candidate had succeeded to the kingdom, and his reign had started with a minor bloodbath. What justification could there be for all this?” (1968, 161). Let us turn to the particulars of that now, beginning with the vilification of Adonijah.

Solomon usurped power from Adonijah. The rhetoric of the apology begins to become more clear when the focus shifts to Adonijah. The apologist employs a version of the motif of the unworthy rival in his response to this charge. He introduces Solomon’s rival as arrogant: “And Adonijah son of Haggith was exalting himself, saying, ‘I will rule’” (1 Kgs 1:5). He then describes him as another of David’s spoiled, overweening sons, borrowing terminology from the earlier stories of Amnon and Absalom to do so. Like Amnon, “his father had not chastened him” (1 Kgs 1:6; cf. 2 Sam 13:21).⁵⁰ The comparisons to Absalom are blatant and must be deliberate: just like his elder brother, Adonijah “took for himself chariots and horsemen and fifty men to run before him” (1 Kgs 1:5; cf. the nearly verbatim parallel in 2 Sam 15:1) and Adonijah “was also very good-looking” (1 Kgs 1:6; cf. 2 Sam 14:25). In case the reader has not yet picked up on the comparisons, the narrator concludes with the explicit statement, “and she bore him after Absalom” (1 Kgs 1:6).⁵¹

After comparing Adonijah to his fraternal paragon of presumption, the apologist contrasts this with Solomon’s passivity (cf. Seibert 2006, 115–22), using another motif often employed in apologies. Like David, Solomon is simply along for the ride, but while David at least partook in the major events of his rise, Solomon is off stage and a complete nonparticipant as the drama unfolds.⁵² Even when forced to play a role, Solomon is only an object acted upon: “they mounted Solomon on King David’s mule and they brought him to Gihon. And Zadok the priest ... anointed Solomon” (1 Kgs 1:38–39). Solomon does not appear as the subject of a

50. This phrase is missing from the MT of 2 Sam 13:21, but appears in LXX and should be reconstructed in 4QSam^a (which contains part of the LXX plus, but the part containing this phrase is lost in a lacuna). It appears to have been omitted by haplography; see McCarter 1984, 319–20.

51. This notice continues to confuse commentators since the subjectless verb implies that Absalom and Adonijah had the same mother, which is not corroborated by the rest of the biblical record. I presume that the author was not concerned with that because the purpose of this statement was only to connect Absalom and Adonijah, which he did, though perhaps with too much zeal for terseness. See Ishida 1987, 173–74.

52. Perhaps an even greater contrast is that while the events of David’s rise are manipulated by Yahweh, the events of Solomon’s rise are manipulated by the conspiratorial Nathan and Bathsheba.

verb until the report to Adonijah that “Solomon sits on the throne of the kingdom” (1 Kgs 1:46).⁵³ If, therefore, people complain about the dubious nature of Solomon’s ascent to the throne, they should not direct their complaints to the king, for he had little to do with it.

The strategy behind the apologist’s use of the motifs of the unworthy rival and passivity appears when one attempts to reconstruct more of the history of the turbulent times. As suggested above, Adonijah was likely the presumptive heir. In light of this, what the apologist does not say is quite telling. Despite the tendency in secondary literature to refer to the intrigue in 1 Kgs 1 as Adonijah’s uprising/rebellion/usurpation, the apologist never makes this claim (cf. Ishida 1987, 174–77). Until the Abishag incident, Adonijah is accused of character flaws, not crimes. Nothing in the biblical text indicates that Adonijah’s behavior breached protocol in any way. Although the narrator informs the audience of Adonijah’s aspirations to be king (1 Kgs 1:5), he does not suggest that Adonijah actually did have himself crowned prematurely.⁵⁴ I conclude from this that Adonijah’s candidacy lacked any red flags, for if they existed the apologist would have emphasized them. Without such ammunition, the apologist redirects the audience to Adonijah’s personal failings. Even if Adonijah were the legitimate successor, his presumptuousness disqualified him from office. Solomon, on the other hand, had no such vice. Of course, Solomon’s detractors were probably more concerned about his seeming

53. Note the similarity of this to the response to the charge that Nabonidus usurped the throne (cf. §9.3). Seibert implies that a similar charge was leveled against Solomon: “it is reasonable to conclude that the passive portrait of Solomon was intended to exonerate him from certain suspicions surrounding his rise to power” (2006, 121). This is a feasible, if unsubstantiated, idea.

54. The only actual political maneuvering that Adonijah does appears in the enigmatic 1 Kgs 1:9, “And Adonijah sacrificed sheep and goats, and oxen, and fattened cattle by the Stone of Zohelet, which is near En Rogel. And he invited all his brothers, the sons of the king, and all the Judahites, the servants of the king.” But the nature of this sacrificial feast is unclear; Provan appropriately comments, “There is really nothing in 1:9–10 to suggest that Adonijah’s meal is the coronation banquet it appears to have become in vv. 13, 18–19, 24–25” (1995a, 28; see also Ishida 1987, 174). For all the comparisons between Adonijah and Absalom, the account in 1 Kgs 1 has no equivalent of 2 Sam 15:10, which relates how Absalom instructed the partygoers to proclaim “Absalom rules in Hebron!” at the appropriate moment. The apology later states on three occasions that “Adonijah rules” (1 Kgs 1:11, 13, 18) and once that Adonijah’s adherents are shouting “(Long) live King Adonijah!” (1 Kgs 1:25), but every time this is in the mouth of either Nathan or Bathsheba, who (a) are depicted as conspiring on Solomon’s behalf and (b) were not invited to En Rogel, so they could not have knowledge of the events transpiring there anyhow. Given that the narrative invites a hermeneutic of suspicion regarding Nathan’s machinations here (see above), it does not seem that the audience is meant to take this as an accurate portrayal of Adonijah’s feast.

bloodthirstiness, so much of the apology's responses are geared towards that, beginning with the demise of recently ousted Adonijah.

Solomon ordered the murder of Adonijah. Adonijah's end marks the first in a series of three deaths that are presented in the apology as justifiable executions but must have been regarded by Solomon's contemporaries as politically expedient assassinations. Since all the victims were prominent individuals, Solomon's actions could not have been swept under the rug with any pretense of plausibility. Thus the apologist adopts a transformative rhetorical strategy⁵⁵ in each instance by producing extenuating circumstances that demonstrate how each victim ushered in his own fate. Solomon's role was that of executor of justice, not insecure despot.

As shown above, Adonijah appears to have been the presumptive heir whose throne, in the view of the populace, was seized by the arriviste Solomon and his supporters. As the eldest living son of David and with support in both military and religious spheres, Adonijah presented a constant threat to Solomon. Since, however, he had committed no crime during his self-exaltation, and moreover had (publicly?) received amnesty from Solomon while grasping the horns of the altar, Solomon could not have him killed without sufficient cause. The apology furnishes him with precisely this—Adonijah attempted to undermine Solomon's rule by requesting to marry Abishag, David's former nurse.⁵⁶ That taking one's predecessor's concubines constitutes staking a claim to the kingship is seen elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, most saliently for SN in the story of Absalom's rebellion (2 Sam 16:21–22; see Tsevat 1958, 241–43).⁵⁷ Adonijah responded to Solomon's beneficence with treason and therefore deserved, even demanded, to be executed. Letting such an act go unpunished would open the door for all manner of sedition, so as a good king Solomon's hand was forced. Adonijah had to die.

Modern commentators have not been generous with Solomon in the evaluation of this defense (Halpern 2001, 398; 2000, 182; McKenzie 2000a, 181). If genuine, Adonijah's strategy of bringing his treason directly to the king and queen

55. One could technically argue that, given the stated charge of ordering a "murder," the apologist actually used the reformative strategy of denial—Solomon did not order a murder (by definition, an illegal act), but an execution (by definition, a legal act). This would be a rather silly semantic objection, however, and the presentation of new information (Adonijah's treasonous request and David's testament regarding Joab and Shimei) certainly qualifies this aspect of the apology as transformative. This applies also to the defenses of Solomon's involvement in the killings of Joab and Shimei.

56. On the meaning of "nurse" (סִכְנָתָהּ, 1 Kgs 1:2), see Cogan 2000, 156. Cogan's insistence that "Her duties were confined to nursing the failing king" misses the point of 1 Kgs 1:1–4, however; the narrator implies that another of her duties was to have sexual intercourse with David.

57. Nearly all scholars accept this, but see the objection by Würthwein (1974, 38–39).

mother leaves something to be desired from the standpoint of strategy.⁵⁸ Additionally, the fact that the objectionable petition was made in private, with no witnesses, does not enhance the apology's credibility.⁵⁹ Given the available evidence, one is hard pressed not to throw in one's lot with the accusers in this particular situation. These sentiments were expressed best by Frank Moore Cross:

Solomon's chief potential rival, Adonijah, David's eldest after Absalom, was murdered on the pretext that he had asked for the hand of David's young wife Abishag. Such a request—if Adonijah made it—would have been understood in Israel as an open claim to David's throne. The circumstances under which Adonijah's alleged request for Abishag were made are remarkable. The request was transmitted through Bathsheba, whose ambitious court intrigues designed to place her beloved son Solomon on the throne were well known. Solomon denied, so to speak, his mother's request and executed Adonijah for sufficient cause. We doubt if even the most fervid supporter of Solomon could have related this tale without tongue in cheek. If Adonijah did in fact behave as claimed, he deserved to be executed—for stupidity. (Cross 1973, 237)

Solomon ordered the murder of Joab. Reconstructing this accusation is easy because Solomon's reasons for wanting Joab eliminated are obvious. Having led the army throughout David's reign, Joab wielded military power and appears to have commanded the loyalties of many troops. This supplied him with tremendous influence in Israel, which he used to support Adonijah, the rival of Solomon. As long as he lived, Joab's specter loomed over Solomon and his suspiciously established regime.⁶⁰ In addition to all this, one may speculate that Solomon was prevented from winning Joab over to his side by Benaiah,

58. Seibert is one of the few who attempts to defend Adonijah's judgment: "It seems better to regard this as a calculated risk rather than an act of utter stupidity" (2006, 139; Ishida also seems to lean in this direction, though he is less explicit [1987, 178–79]). Perhaps it is unfair to judge from our remove given the advantage of hindsight, but if the request were a "calculated risk," it strikes me as an egregious calculation.

59. Various scholars have attempted to interpret the text to play up Bathsheba's historical role in the affair (e.g., McKenzie 2000a, 180–83). That is, perhaps Bathsheba fabricated the request and Solomon, trusting his mother, acted out of genuine conviction. This seems to go too far with the available evidence, however, especially given that one recurrent theme of the apology is the distancing of Solomon from the dubious deeds. Thus this notice could be more rhetorical than historical.

60. Ishida treats Adonijah as little more than a figurehead for a regime truly led by Joab: "However, since the aim of Solomon's *coup d'état* was to remove Joab's influence over the regime, Solomon had to get rid of Joab by any possible means ... the target of Solomon's party was Joab's downfall" (Ishida 1982, 186).

who likely coveted Joab's position over the army (see 1 Kgs 2:35).⁶¹ According to the apologist, however, none of this factored into Joab's execution. Solomon himself was just following orders—the orders of David, given just before his passing (1 Kgs 2:5–6). The orders are the first of three instructions in the so-called testament of David (1 Kgs 2:2–9*). The apologist implies that since the commands issued from the throne itself, Solomon was not at liberty to ignore them. Moreover, Joab had earned his death sentence through his ruthlessness while serving David: the grounds for execution are his murders of Abner and Amasa, both of whom were dispatched shortly after pledging support for David, according to TDRR (see my discussions on pp. 233–36 and pp. 240–41 in §5.3, respectively). As with Adonijah, the apologist justifies Solomon's involvement in Joab's death rather than denying it. The apology transforms the event from a cold-blooded political assassination to a pious administration of justice, ridding David's household of the bloodguilt incurred by Joab (1 Kgs 2:31).

This justification is, in one sense, incontrovertible. The legitimacy of Solomon's actions is established beyond dispute on the dual foundation of a royal order and an expiatory act. Now dead, David cannot be questioned regarding the genuineness of his testament, which was delivered in private to Solomon. All the bases are covered. Despite this—and somewhat because of this—this justification seems astonishingly flimsy (see esp. Seibert 2006, 145–50 and the literature cited there). The apologist defends the execution as punishment for two deeds committed several years, presumably multiple decades, beforehand. The author of Joab's demise is David, to whom Joab was unexceptionally loyal during his lengthy tenure. Joab likely committed both acts to further the best interests of David, even if in Abner's case David took pains to distance himself from the deed. David responded to both of Joab's supposed transgressions by promoting him, not an act suggestive of displeasure. Yet the audience is meant to believe that David's unverifiable dying words to his son demanded the elimination of this dedicated servant. Not surprisingly, the majority of scholars suspect some skulduggery here (Sweeney 2007, 70; Halpern 2001, 399–400; McKenzie 2000a, 178–79; Provan 1995b, 109–14; Ishida 1982, 185–86). Indeed, even the apologist indicates some leanings this way. Joab flees when he learns of Adonijah's execution (1 Kgs 2:28), which does not make sense within the apologetic horizon of Adonijah dying for a second attempt to gain the throne. The narrative also draws attention to Joab's loyalty to David with the enigmatic comment that "Joab had inclined after Adonijah, but after Absalom Joab had not inclined" (1 Kgs 2:28). In view of the additional attention drawn to Solomon violating the sanctity of the tabernacle by having Joab slain at the altar,

61. One may further speculate that Joab's position was the price of Benaiah's support during Solomon's bid for the throne.

one wonders if the author of this text intended to convey multiple messages about Solomon.⁶²

In sum, like so much of Solomon's apology, this particular defense is difficult to figure out. Although it was clearly composed to absolve Solomon by demonstrating that his punishment of Joab was condign, its means of doing so is, in the most generous of assessments, unconvincing. But David's testament served as a defense against other allegations as well, and to these we now turn.

Solomon held the descendants of Barzillai hostage. This accusation derives from 1 Kgs 2:7, which provides a brief sequel to David's meeting with Barzillai the Gileadite while returning from Mahanaim after quelling Absalom's rebellion (2 Sam 19:32–41 [31–40]). In this verse David instructs Solomon, "And deal faithfully with the children of Barzillai the Gileadite, that they may be among those who eat at your table. For thus they drew near to me when I fled before Absalom your brother." There is good reason to suspect that Solomon's opponents did not view the Gileadites' presence in Solomon's court as an honor, however. Despite Barzillai's assistance of David during a vulnerable point in his reign, it seems that the relationship between the two households deteriorated afterward. Though Barzillai was ostensibly loyal to David, he was a representative of Gilead, a region faithful to Saul during both his reign and Ish-Baal's.⁶³ It is therefore possible that this region may have harbored some antagonistic sentiments toward the Davidic (or at least non-Saulide) dynasty. Such hostility would not have been alleviated if, as seems to be indicated by 2 Sam 21:8, David turned over five of Barzillai's grandchildren to the Gibeonites for execution.⁶⁴ In light of this, the Gileadites at Solomon's table presumably were perceived to be hostages held in Jerusalem to

62. This text serves as a prime example of Seibert's theory of subversive scribes: "If this text was written as court apologetic, to use McCarter's language, how can this damning transparency be accounted for? What kind of loyal state-sponsored scribe would provide such flimsy rationale for Joab's execution while simultaneously exposing Solomon's self-serving motives for eliminating the extremely powerful man? Should this be regarded as the product of a sloppy submissive scribe, trying to put the best face on a bad situation but doing a lousy job in the process? Or does it make more sense to understand this text as the work of a subversive scribe, intentionally 'hiding' a critique of the king's actions in the guise of propaganda? I suggest the latter. While a propagandistic veneer is undeniable in this episode, the presence of certain ambiguities and tensions which allow for alternative and less salutary readings point to significant subversive activity in this text" (2006, 149–50).

63. The citizens of Jabesh-Gilead buried Saul after his death (1 Sam 31:11–13). Also, when Ish-Baal moved the seat of his government to Mahanaim, Abner "made him king over Gilead" (2 Sam 2:9). See McCarter 1984, 87.

64. A question concerning the identification of Barzillai derives from the gentilic in 2 Sam 21:8. This Barzillai is identified as "the Meholathite" (cf. 1 Sam 18:19), whereas elsewhere Barzillai is "the Gileadite (from Rogelim)" (2 Sam 17:27; 19:32[31]; 1 Kgs 2:7). Since Abel-Meholah lay within the region of Gilead, it seems likely that all references to Barzillai refer to the same individual (Halpern 2001, 302; McCarter 1984, 442).

help keep the region of Gilead under control, a practice already begun in David's reign (2 Sam 19:32–41[31–40]).

The apologist's response to this charge is neither complicated nor new. We have already seen in David's apology that the "reward" of eating at the king's table could essentially serve as an excuse to keep potentially problematic parties under close surveillance (cf. 2 Sam 9:10–11 and §5.3). The defense has two elements; it translates the impetus for this questionable act to David instead of Solomon through the former king's testament, and it portrays the Gileadites' status as guests instead of hostages. Despite the tendency of scholars to take David's instruction at face value as a command to treat Barzillai's descendants well (cf. Seibert 2006, 137 n. 107),⁶⁵ I suspect that they had little input regarding their residence in Jerusalem.

Solomon ordered the murder of Shimei. The final act of Solomon justified by the testament of David was his action against Shimei, the Benjaminite who ridiculed and cursed David during the latter's flight from Absalom (2 Sam 16:5–14) but was granted clemency for this offense during David's return home (2 Sam 19:17–24[16–23]). We do not know much about Shimei's relationship to the house of David after these events, but he obviously remained an enemy of the ruling dynasty. Even David's initial exoneration probably did little to mend fences between the two factions—I suspect the oath not to kill Shimei derived from the contingent of one thousand Benjaminites and Saul's household who accompanied Shimei to meet him (2 Sam 19:17–18[16–17]) rather than from an excess of goodwill. Given Shimei's status as leader of those who formerly supported Saul, he might have attempted to exploit the turmoil at the time of succession to make another bid at restoring the throne to Benjamin. Thus when he was murdered by Solomon's hatchet man, people must have wondered.

A problem arises when analyzing the response to this charge. As is, the biblical text provides two completely divorced justifications for Shimei's death sentence: David's testament (1 Kgs 2:8–9) and the violation of orders not to leave Jerusalem (1 Kgs 2:36–46*). Some scholars take this as evidence that the testament is part of a later stratum, but this is not entirely satisfactory because that leaves Solomon's initial confinement of Shimei (1 Kgs 2:36) unjustified. There is no obvious solution to this, and I will treat the defenses separately here.⁶⁶

65. One exception is DeVries, who notes that "David's insistence that his sons be permanently at his table (= his court) may in fact have been motivated as much by the desire to keep them under surveillance as to reward them for past favors" (1985, 36).

66. One proposal for resolving this contradiction is quite feasible. If 1 Kgs 2:9b is a later gloss (see §6.2.2), the story unfolds nicely. David instructs Solomon to deal with Shimei according to his wisdom; Solomon acts upon this by confining Shimei to Jerusalem so that he cannot stir up trouble with his power base in Bahurim; Shimei violates this parole and earns a death sentence. Thus the justification would take place in two stages: the testament justifies the initial arrest and Shimei's movement outside Jerusalem justifies the execution.

Probably the most incriminating aspect of Shimei's murder was the fact that David pardoned him from any offenses he committed. According to the testament, however, contrary to appearances David's oath to Shimei was not a full pardon but merely a mitigation of his sentence. In fact, David himself ordered the death sentence; his final recorded words instruct Solomon to dispatch his adversary: "Now, do not hold [Shimei] innocent, for you are a wise man and you know what you should do to him. Bring his gray head down to Sheol with blood" (1 Kgs 2:9). One might attribute some chicanery to David here in light of his earlier oath, but nonetheless the dutiful son Solomon had to fulfill his father's dying wish.

Confusingly, when the apologist finally relates the final chapter in the story of Shimei (1 Kgs 2:36–46*), he does not refer back to David's orders in 1 Kgs 2:8–9, nor does Solomon follow his father's instructions. Instead, a second defense appears. The apologist relates that Solomon placed Shimei under house arrest in Jerusalem, and the penalty for violating it was death (1 Kgs 2:36–37). Shimei knew the terms of the arrangement and accepted Solomon's judgment (1 Kgs 2:38). Yet Shimei made a rather asinine decision a few years later, electing to violate his house arrest in order to journey to Gath to retrieve a pair of runaway slaves.⁶⁷ Having broken his oath to the king to remain in Jerusalem, Solomon's hand was forced and he ordered Shimei's execution.⁶⁸ As with the case of Adonijah, Solomon attempted to be lenient, but his lenience was repaid with disobedience.

Like some of the other claims in Solomon's apology, the Shimei defense strikes one as improbable. If this were an isolated incident one might give Solomon the benefit of the doubt when evaluating this charge, but given its context within a greater purge of Solomon's opponents, the situation seems incriminating. The disposition of most modern scholars to side here with Solomon's detractors rather than his apologist appears well founded.

67. Ishida states that Solomon "entrapped" Shimei (1999, 134), but he does not elaborate how. In any event, this seems to go too far (cf. Halpern 2001, 150).

68. Several commentators have noted a narrative issue in this passage. The practical question—Why would Shimei violate his probation when he knows the ironfisted Solomon is waiting for him to provide an excuse to execute him?—provokes another question, namely, Did Shimei actually violate his probation at all? Walsh argues that Shimei did not; he contends that the death penalty clause in 1 Kgs 2:37 is linked only to crossing the Wadi Kidron, not to the general stipulation not to go anywhere (1 Kgs 2:36). Since Shimei went from Jerusalem southwest to Gath, he would not have crossed the Wadi Kidron, to the east of Jerusalem. He further argues that Solomon's self-misquotation in 1 Kgs 2:42 is a clue by the author that Solomon executed Shimei on false charges (Walsh 1996, 62–63). This strikes me as overanalytical. If Walsh is correct, then Solomon's initial order to Shimei (1 Kgs 2:36) lacked any consequence. See the further rebuttal in Seibert 2006, 152–53.

6.4 THE *SITZ IM LEBEN* OF THE SUCCESSION NARRATIVE

Outside of the text itself, there exist few clues with which we can determine the origins of the composition of SN. As with TDRR, therefore, I submit that the *Sitz im Leben* of SN is best examined on the basis of the rhetorical situation that birthed this apology, namely, the allegations leveled against Solomon after his assumption of the throne. This places the composition of SN within Solomon's reign, a date which has already been suggested by nearly every scholar who recognizes the apologetic mode of the text (see esp. Hutton 2009, 223–25; Seibert 2006, 107; Ishida 1999, 135–36; 1985, 145; Seiler 1998, 319–21; Pennoyer 1993, 27–28; McCarter 1981, 361–62; Thornton 1968, 160; see also Knoppers 1993, 63). Even Knauf, who does not accept the historiographic nature of SN (1997, 87) and does not allow for a bona fide scribal culture in tenth-century Palestine (see Knauf 1991, 172–73), accepts that SN derives from some sort of authentic tradition: “As ‘historical novel,’ the David story draws nevertheless on historical memory, not so much in the guise of the notoriously unverifiable ‘oral tradition’ of past exegesis, but rather on the traditions of Jerusalem’s great families. Family tradition can easily preserve historical facts in a partially correct way for some 500 years” (1997, 87–88).⁶⁹ Many of these scholars go further and point to early in the reign, which seems reasonable.⁷⁰ Coincidentally, this agrees with the conclusion of Rost, arrived at from a much different angle, that “The most likely possibility [for the date of composition of the Succession Narrative], therefore, is the beginning of the Solomonic period” (1982, 105).⁷¹ The notice that three years elapsed between Solomon’s order to Shimei and Shimei’s violation of the order and subsequent execution (1 Kgs 2:39) provides a *terminus post quem* for SN of three years after Solomon’s accession, and we may surmise that the text was

69. Knauf also proposes the intriguing, but unfortunately untestable, speculation that the enigmatic Rei and Shimei of 1 Kgs 1:8 may be a clue to the text’s authorship: “The author(s) may have left their ‘signature’ in 1 Kgs 1:8 by mentioning two supporters of Solomon who have otherwise no function in the narrative” (1997, 87 n. 27). Walsh suggests that “and Rei” (וֹרְעִי) might be emended to “friend (of the king)” (רֵעֵה, cf. 1 Kgs 4:5), a noun modifying Shimei (1996, 8 n. 2). This would modify Knauf’s speculation somewhat but ultimately render it more plausible.

70. An exception to this is Hutton, who, citing Tadmor (1983), asserts that “This developing text would have carried the greatest degree of political cachet around the time of Solomon’s death and Rehoboam’s accession” (Hutton 2009, 223). Such reasoning, however, stems from an erroneous methodology that attempts to homogenize the various ancient Near Eastern apologies (see Knapp 2013; also §1.5 above and my conclusions in §10.2.3). Solomon’s apology could date from the end of his reign, but one cannot conclude this on the basis of the far different historical situation that elicited Esarhaddon’s apology (see §8.4 and my forthcoming article, “The *Sitz im Leben* of Esarhaddon’s Apology”).

71. Rost, of course, refers here to the entirety of 2 Sam 9–20 and 1 Kgs 1–2, not the latter two chapters alone.

commissioned not long after this. The court of Solomon seems like the obvious candidate for the author's provenance.⁷²

72. It is notable that even the proponents of an anti-Solomonic stratum followed by a pro-Solomonic stratum (see §6.2.3) all place the earlier of these strata in the time of Solomon's reign. It is difficult to grasp, therefore, how they all situate the pro-Solomonic redaction several centuries later. Hutton also recognizes this difficulty, and responds, "Both solutions [Würthwein's idea of a post-Deuteronomic stratum and Langlamet's idea of a Hezekian stratum] to the problematic date of the redaction strike me as odd. Langlamet's Hezekian dating would, of course, substantiate the claim defended here that the bulk of the SSN—with its schematized flight to and return from Transjordan—had already been compiled by the time Dtr received that source. However, even a date as late as Hezekiah's reign makes little sense from a functionalist standpoint. The crises facing Hezekiah and Josiah were externally imposed. In neither case was the Davidic monarch in a position in which his throne was threatened from within the community (and would therefore need to be defended by referring the audience to Solomon's legitimacy and deflecting the blame for Solomon's draconian treatment of his rivals onto the scheming Joab). Far more likely, it would seem, is that the need to defend Solomon's legitimacy would have arisen during that monarch's own reign or during the early years of Rehoboam's, in which the legitimacy of Davidic rule over the northern kingdom was ardently challenged and successfully cast off" (2009, 213). In their zeal to date the pro-Solomonic aspect of SN to a later period, Würthwein, Veijola, and Langlamet fail to account for the rhetorical situation of the text.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE TEL DAN INSCRIPTION OF HAZAEL

7.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF HAZAEL'S ACCESSION

HAZAELE REIGNED over Aram-Damascus in the late ninth century BCE, and despite a mounting corpus of texts that mention him, he remains an enigmatic figure. The scholarly view of Hazael has seesawed during the last century. In the early 1900s, scholars wrote of an Aramean Empire including all, or nearly all, of Syria-Palestine.¹ Around the middle of the century this notion began to change, with scholars attributing such a view to an uncritical reading of the biblical record, particularly 2 Kings. For example, in his comprehensive work *The Aramaeans*, Lipiński writes, "One should resist the temptation of overstating the power of the kingdom of Damascus because of the role it played in the relations between Aram and Israel" (2000, 367). But this seems like an overcorrection—while the evidence for Hazael's reign is disparate and often ambiguous, everything points to an ambitious and successful monarch who did in fact subjugate the majority of Syria-Palestine. Under Hazael's rule Aram-Damascus was unquestionably the ascendant power in the Levant, and perhaps even in the entire ancient Near East.²

Reconstructing the history of Hazael's origins and reign is a difficult process. We have no continuous annals for Aram-Damascus, only scattered and always fragmentary epigraphic remains. The historian must triangulate this Aramean evidence with the brief glimpses afforded by Assyrian and biblical sources documenting the same period. But correlating the sundry sources is a difficult task; the Assyrian annals, biblical record, and epigraphic material do not often interact

1. For example, Jepsen writes, "Dabei mag das Vordringen der aramäischen Einwanderer Hazael nicht unwesentlich unterstützt haben, und es ist zu vermuten, dass er vor allem mit ihrer Hilfe sein Zeil, eine grössere Geschlossenheit Syriens, erreichte. Damit dürfte dann auch der Titel Bar-Hadads 'König von Aram' seine Rechtfertigung finden und die Vermutung nahegelegt sein, dass Hazael diesen selben Titel auch schon (ob wohl als erster?) geführt hat" (1941, 168).

2. Although some might scoff at this suggestion, it should be noted that the inner turmoil in Assyria during the final years of Shalmaneser III (858–824 BCE) and throughout the time of Šamši-Adad V (823–811 BCE) was far-reaching. In fact, two booty inscriptions suggest that Hazael even crossed the Euphrates ("the river"), raiding the Assyrian heartland during this period (Eph'al and Naveh 1989, 195–96; Dion 1997, 201–3, *pace* Lipiński 2000, 389; Younger 2005, 259–60).

directly—and when they do, the portrait created is rarely harmonious. Thus the historian must exercise discretion, weighing the evidence of each to establish the most likely scenario. I will begin with the Assyrian material.

Hazael appears in the annals of Shalmaneser III, who ruled Assyria from 858–824 BCE.³ The Assyrian empire experienced a resurgence in the late tenth and early ninth centuries BCE. Rulers such as Adad-nirari II (910–891), Tukulti-Ninurta II (890–884), and Assurnasirpal II (883–859) all led successful campaigns at the outskirts of the Assyrian heartland and developed the nation's military. When Shalmaneser III took power, he immediately changed Assyrian policy. Instead of executing isolated raids to the surrounding states to receive tribute, Shalmaneser transformed Assyria into a territorial empire bent on annexing outlying regions (see Liverani 1988, 91–92). Within five years Shalmaneser had fully subjugated northern Syria⁴ and with this in his control, he turned his army southward.⁵ As he moved south, Shalmaneser encountered a coalition of Syrian states. The participants in this Syrian coalition⁶ were Levantine states historically at odds with one another, and thus it was an *ad hoc* alliance of twelve⁷ rulers with the goal of preventing Shalmaneser from subjugating further territory to the south. The leading members of the coalition were Damascus, led by Hadadezer (Adad-idri), which contributed more forces than anyone else,⁸ and Hamath, a Syrian state northwest

3. For a comprehensive edition of Shalmaneser's annals, see RIMA 3. For historical analysis of his various campaigns, see Yamada 2000.

4. By “northern Syria” I mean Syria as defined by the ancients, that is, the entity to the west and south of the Assyrian heartland in Mesopotamia. Shalmaneser's initial efforts were concentrated against Bit-Adini, encompassing the bend in the Euphrates River eastward to approximately the Balih River, and Carchemish, just northwest of the bend in the Euphrates.

5. The annexation of the area around the bend in the Euphrates was obviously the primary objective of the first phase of Shalmaneser's territorial ambition. Bit-Adini and the surrounding region provided a corridor both southward, to the Levant, and northwestward, to the Neo-Hittite powers of Anatolia. It is not surprising that Shalmaneser heavily fortified Til Barsip, rechristening it Kar Shalmaneser and using it as a base of operations for his subsequent campaigns. See Ikeda 1999.

6. This coalition has come to be known as the “Damascus coalition” because Damascus played the central role over its decade of existence (the term apparently derives from Grayson; see *CAH* 3/1, 261–63; Grayson 2004). Referring to the alliance as the Damascus coalition at its inception may be a slight misnomer, however; Hamath seems to have been regarded as a coleader during the Battle of Qarqar.

7. Or eleven, or thirteen, or fourteen, or fifteen; see Younger 2007a, 256–57.

8. RIMA 3, 23 A.O.102.2. Specifically, Hadadezer lent 1,200 chariots, 1,200 cavalry, and 20,000 troops to the force according to the annals. Hamath and Israel, the other substantive members of the coalition, each contributed about half as much as Damascus, while the other members contributed much less (save 10,000 troops of Irqanatu, which may be a mistake; see Yamada 2000, 161).

of Damascus which served as a bridge between the northern and southern Syrian states. The coalition was also joined by Samaria,⁹ ruled by Ahab—a fact which significantly impacts the discussion of Hazael's rise. The coalition successfully resisted the Assyrian juggernaut at the famous Battle of Qarqar in 853 BCE,¹⁰ and then again in 849, 848, and 845, and Shalmaneser lists Hadadezer as the leader of the forces on each occasion. He next ventured west of the Euphrates in 842, but apparently did not move farther south than the area of northern Syria already under his control (Yamada 2000, 183–85). He returned to southern Syria in 841, where a new geopolitical landscape awaited him. The annals mention no coalition of defenders; Shalmaneser's only opposition in the area came from Aram-Damascus, now ruled by Hazael. Hazael successfully fended off the Assyrian onslaught and Shalmaneser eventually turned his attention elsewhere. After marching west to the coast he received tribute from some former adversaries—including Samaria, now ruled by Jehu after a bloody coup narrated in 2 Kgs 9—without any resistance. After another two years away from the area, Shalmaneser returned to the region in 838 and campaigned against Damascus for two years. Hazael again rebuffed his advance, and Shalmaneser never returned to the area.¹¹

In summary, the Assyrian annals show a coalition of Syrian states led by Hadadezer of Aram from 853–845, then an isolated, but still defiant, Aram, led by Hazael in 841. There is no information pertinent to the intervening three years except for one laconic comment, not preserved in any of Shalmaneser's annalistic texts but in one slightly later summary inscription.¹² The text, which telescopes all the major events of central Syria into a few paragraphs, reads, “Hadadezer

9. Throughout the book I use “Samaria” to refer to the northern kingdom of the divided Israelite monarchy, at least after Omri's relocation of the capital to Samaria. I prefer this term to avoid the problem that “Israel” can refer to several different entities. In this section, however, new problems are introduced, since both Assyrian and Aramean sources refer to the state as “Israel.” I translate these all literally, but continue to use “Samaria” in my own discussion.

10. For the Battle of Qarqar, see Yamada 2000, 153–63; Galil 2002, 42–48; and Younger 2007a, 247–62.

11. *Contra* several other scholars, I argue that Shalmaneser left Damascus because he was defeated by Hazael. See my discussion below in §7.4.

12. For details of this text, Summary Inscription 19, see Yamada 2000, 45–46. Yamada dates it to ca. 834. For an edition, see RIMA 3, 117–19 A.O.102.40.

(Adad-idri) passed away¹³ (and) Hazael, son of a nobody, seized¹⁴ the throne” (*Adad-idri šadāšu ēmid / Ḫaza’-ilu mār lā mammāna / kussā iṣ baṭ* i 25–27). “Son of a nobody” is a pejorative term used for usurpers in Akkadian sources, demonstrating that Shalmaneser did not accept Hazael as the appropriate successor to Hadadezer.¹⁵ Thus the Akkadian evidence provides no details but suggests that an illicit coup landed Hazael on the throne of Aram. One would be inclined to dismiss this as propaganda meant to denigrate Shalmaneser’s incorrigible adversary if not for its broad agreement with the biblical tradition, to which we turn next.

The Hebrew Bible includes two passages relevant to Hazael’s accession. The first is 1 Kgs 19:15–17, “And Yahweh said to [Elijah], ‘Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus, and come and anoint Hazael as king over Aram. And Jehu, son of Nimshi, you shall anoint as king over Israel, and Elisha, son of Shaphat, from Abel-Meholah, you shall anoint as prophet in your stead. And it shall be that the one who escapes the sword of Hazael, Jehu will kill, and the one who escapes the sword of Jehu, Elisha will kill.’” The origin of these divine instructions—which, incidentally, are not fulfilled verbatim since Elijah does not have any interaction with Hazael, and a member of Elisha’s prophetic company anoints Jehu (2 Kgs 9:1–3)—remains elusive. Good arguments have been made both in favor of it being a predeuteronomistic passage (Schniedewind 1996, 84) and a postdeuteronomistic passage (McKenzie 1991, 81–87). In any event, the text reflects a tradition that considered the Hazael and Jehu revolts as parts of one overarching whole.

The second pertinent biblical passage is longer, but deserves to be quoted in full:

Elisha came to Damascus. And Ben-Hadad, king of Aram, was ill. And it was reported to him, “A man of God has come here.” And the king said to Hazael, “Take in your hand a gift and go to meet the man of God, and you shall inquire of Yahweh through him whether

13. It has been noted that the Akkadian expression *šadāšu emēdu* (lit. “to lean on one’s mountain”) is not strictly a euphemism for death, though it certainly is in the majority of cases (Stith 2008, 51–52). But Shalmaneser tends to admit it when his adversaries flee in order to save their lives (for example, later in this passage, i 31–32, though this may be of necessity since Shalmaneser encountered Hazael again in a few years), so it seems probable that this is a reference to Hadadezer’s passing.

14. Most translators render *iṣ baṭ* there with the less forceful “took” (RIMA 3, 118 A.0.102.40; Yamada 2000, 188; Younger 2005, 247; Stith 2008, 52), but this ignores the fact that in most (but admittedly not all) instances of the phrase *kussū ṣ abātu* the reference is to some sort of usurper; see *CAD* Ṣ : 27–28 sub ṣ *abātu* 8.

15. This has been discussed by several scholars, most recently Younger (2005, 247) and Stith (2008, 52–53). Some assert that this phrase demands that Hazael was a commoner, from an unknown lineage, but I think this reads too much into the expression (see Stith 2008, 52–53).

I will live through this illness.” So Hazael went to meet him, and he took a gift in his hand, and all the good things of Damascus, forty camel-loads. And he came and stood before him, saying, “Your son Ben-Hadad, king of Aram, sent me to you, saying, ‘Will I live through this illness?’” And Elisha said to him, “Go, say to him, ‘You will surely live.’ But Yahweh has shown me that he will surely die.” And he stood, and set his face until he was ashamed. And the man of God wept. And Hazael said, “Why is my lord weeping?” And he said, “Because I know the evil you will do to the Israelites; their fortresses you will set on fire, their young men you will slay with the sword, their little ones you will smash, and their pregnant women you will rip open.” And Hazael said, “But what is your servant but a dog, that he should do this great thing?” And Elisha said, “Yahweh has shown you to me as king over Aram.” And he went from Elisha and he came to his lord, and he said to him, “What did Elisha say to you?” And he said, “He said to me that you will surely live.” And on the following day he took the covering, and he dipped (it) in water, and he spread (it) over his face, and he died. And Hazael ruled in his place. (2 Kgs 8:7–15)

This fascinating pericope, also of mysterious origin, narrates Hazael’s assassination of the king of Aram.¹⁶ Like Shalmaneser’s summary inscription, this text provides one crucial detail—Hazael murdered his predecessor—but omits many items of interest. Neither Hazael’s lineage nor his vocation is provided; he is presented only as an intimate of the king. Even the predecessor’s identity is ambiguous; the Hebrew Bible dubs him Ben-Hadad, but the appellation is likely a later addition to identify an anonymous character (albeit incorrectly).¹⁷

Apart from this, the Hebrew Bible does not inform the narrative of Hazael’s accession—if anything, it obfuscates it. The Elijah/Elisha cycle in 1–2 Kings depicts perpetual hostility between Aram and Samaria during the period immediately preceding Hazael and Jehu. Several skirmishes between the two states transpire (1 Kgs 20:1–34; 22:1–36; 2 Kgs 6:8–23, 24–7:20) and other interstate relations are reported (2 Kgs 5; 8:7–15). When coupled with the description of the Syrian coalition in Shalmaneser’s annals, several scholars envision the period of Hadadezer of Aram and Ahab of Samaria as a time when the two states constantly clashed but set aside their differences when the specter of Assyria loomed in the region. But I

16. *Pace* Lemaire, who translates the final verse, “Et il arriva le lendemain, et il prit le *makbēr* et il le trempa/plongea dans l’eau et il l’étendit sur son visage et il mourut et Hazaël régna à sa place” (1991, 96; cf. also Sasson 1996, 548–49). This interpretation, which has not been accepted by many scholars, stretches the semantic range of the Hebrew. Moreover, it seems that the narrator included Elisha’s comment about the king’s impending death to serve as impetus for Hazael’s regicide.

17. For more on this issue, see Pitard 1987, 132–38.

submit that this is a misinterpretation of the biblical evidence. In the *textus receptus*, the ubiquitous Aramean-Samaritan conflicts occur during the reigns of Ahab and Joram—but several scholars have provided persuasive evidence that the passages are chronologically out of place, and the historical memory underlying the various skirmishes depicted dates from the time of Jehoahaz in the late ninth and early eighth centuries.¹⁸ With this anachronism accounted for, there is no evidence to suggest that the Aramean-Samaritan alliance of the middle of the ninth century was marred by border wars,¹⁹ and it is just as likely that the peaceful relations between the two states continued throughout the reigns of Hadadezer in Damascus and the Omrides in Samaria. In light of this, I suspect that the notice of war between Joram and Hazael at Ramoth-gilead in 2 Kgs 8:28–29 marks the beginning of the long period of Aramean-Samaritan conflict.²⁰

The final source that demands attention regarding Hazael's accession is the epigraphic material, specifically the Tel Dan Inscription. Since, as will be explained below, the text seems to record apologetic material for Hazael and will be examined closely in the following sections, a few brief remarks will suffice here. Written in the first person from Hazael's perspective, the text mentions "my father" three times and describes the father's seemingly natural death—an odd claim for a usurper who came to power in a bloody coup, as the Hebrew Bible asserts. After the father's demise, the Samaritan king invaded Aramean land; in response Hazael was crowned with the divine support of Hadad. Hazael fended off the invasion and defeated the kings of Samaria and Judah.

18. The evidence includes the fact that the majority of references mention the "king of Israel" or the "king of Aram" without a name (the names were inserted later, erroneously); the Septuagint has some of these passages in a different arrangement than MT, suggesting that the narratives are a later insertion; and the Septuagint mentions the names of the kings in different places than MT. This was suggested early on by Jepsen (1941, 154–59) and has been accepted by several recent commentators; for a concise discussion of the evidence, see Pitard 1987, 114–22.

19. The one other piece of evidence that has been cited in support of hostility between Ahab and Hadadezer is the near-universal mistranslation of *qdm* in line 4 of the Tel Dan Inscription as "previously." Despite its persistence in editions of this text, understanding *qdm* as a temporal adverb here has no philological basis, and this interpretation should be discarded. I suspect that this term is a GN (see Knapp 2014a and my discussion below in §7.2.2, esp. p. 286 n. 32; see also Kottsieper 2007, 109, 113–14), though a local adverb (Lemaire 1998, 5; Stith 2008, 42 n. 28) or a verb (Na'aman 2000b, 96–97) is not out of the question. In any event, lines 3–4 of the Tel Dan Inscription do not refer to events in the time of Hazael's predecessor.

20. During the first decades of this conflict, during Hazael's reign, Aram was clearly ascendant. This period probably set the original backdrop for the stories of 2 Kgs 5–7. But at the turn of the century Samaria began to turn the tide, providing the backdrop for stories such as 1 Kgs 20:1–34 and 22:1–36.

About the only item on which the sources all agree is that Hazael did not ascend the throne in a regular manner.²¹ Beyond this, synthesis of the competing claims in the Assyrian, biblical, and epigraphic sources remains open to debate. For other discussions of Hazael and the evidence pertaining to him, see Lemaire 1991 and Younger 2005.²² For the most complete and the most recent discussion of Hazael's accession, see Stith 2008, which has not received due attention.²³ No easy solution to the problems outlined above presents itself, and much depends on how one interprets the text that provides the apologetic material under discussion here. To this we now turn.

7.2 THE TEXT

Hazael's apology appears on the fragmentary Tel Dan Stele. The bulk of the inscription appears on Fragment A, discovered in Avraham Biran's excavations at Tel Dan (formerly Tel el-Qadi) in 1993. It measures 32 cm high with a maximum width of 22 cm (Biran and Naveh 1993, 84). Two more pieces, combining to form Fragment B with an inscribed surface of 19.5 × 12 cm (Biran and Naveh 1995b, 9), were discovered the following year. The fragments are connected by a physical join beneath the surface of line 5 (Biran and Naveh 1995b, 11), providing a secure understanding of the relationship between A and B. While both the top and bottom of the stele are lost, Fragment A preserves the right edge and the restoration of lines 3–4 suggest that only one letter is missing on the left side of Fragment B. This leaves a few lines almost entirely preserved. I surmise that not many lines are missing from the beginning of the inscription since the stele seems to narrow slightly toward the top of the right edge; this suggests a rounded top similar to the Mesha Stele (Schniedewind 1996, 78). The amount missing from the bottom is unknown.

21. The Assyrian and biblical evidence for this is obvious; less so is the Aramean evidence. But the use of $\sqrt{mlk}$ in the C stem in line 4 of the Tel Dan Inscription strongly suggests that this was not a typical succession, as scholars have noted before (Biran and Naveh 1995b, 15; Schniedewind 1996, 87 n. 9). Suriano remarks, "The meaning of Hazael's word choice was not to highlight the precarious event of his accession but rather to demonstrate the theological justification for his course of action" (2007, 166). But while this is correct, it remains the case that such a theological justification is needed only because the accession was a "precarious event." Thus the use of this term simultaneously acknowledges the suspiciousness of the accession and justifies it.

22. To these surveys one should add the small fragment discovered at Tel Afis; see Younger 2007b, 139 and Amadasi Guzzo 2005, 21–23, 158, fig. 18.

23. Although I disagree with some of the details, Stith does a masterful job marshaling the pertinent material and judiciously weighing the evidence. To access all of the most pertinent sources apart from the biblical record and the Tel Dan Inscription itself, see his "Appendix 2, Selected Extra-biblical Texts" (2008, 141–62).

Parts of thirteen lines are extant, making this by far the shortest text under consideration in this study. Neither the name of the author of the first-person text nor the name of his kingdom appears, though context all but demands that it is an inscription of Hazael of Aram-Damascus.²⁴ The inscription is written in Old Aramaic and describes the deity Hadad crowning a new king who then marched forth and killed the king of Israel/Samaria and the ruler of the “house of David.” It is largely due to this reference to the “house of David” that the Tel Dan Inscription has achieved a vast amount of attention, since this is one of the two earliest references to the famous biblical king. This reference is almost incidental to the light the inscription sheds on its contemporary ninth-century situation, however, and it is the latter situation that concerns us here.

The *editiones principes* of the Tel Dan Inscription are Biran and Naveh 1993; 1995b. A comprehensive bibliography of the first decade of scholarship on the text can be found in Hagelia 2006, 230–46.

7.2.1 Outline

I	lines 1–2	Description of Deeds of the “Father”
II	lines 3–4	The Death of the “Father” and the Coronation of Hazael
III	lines 5–9	Hazael’s Victories over His Enemies, Including Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of the “House of David”
IV	lines 10–13	Further Military Exploits (very broken)

I. Only a few complete words remain from lines 1–2 of the Tel Dan Inscription, but they are intriguing. “And he cut” (*wa-gazar*) in the first line indicates the mention of a treaty. Contrary to most scholars, who suggest that Hazael here describes a Samarian king violating a treaty with Hazael’s father, I suspect that Hazael refers to a treaty that was honored in the previous generation. The root *lh m* in line 2 suggests a battle, though neither the location nor the involved parties are preserved.

II. The two best-preserved lines of the inscription are, I argue, the two most misunderstood (see Knapp 2014a; also p. 286 n. 32). After the death of Hazael’s

24. Athas claims that Ben-Hadad II “is the only real candidate for the author of the Tel Dan Inscription” (2003, 265), but this is based on a reconstruction of the two fragments of the inscription that ignores the physical join mentioned in the *editio princeps* (of the photos I have seen, the join appears most clearly in Biran and Naveh 1995a, 42). See the discussion in the reviews by Schniedewind (2003) and Na’aman (2004). Wesselius is one of the few who accept the combination of fragments given by Biran and Naveh but refute Hazael’s authorship (1999). He instead posits Jehu as the author, though this view has not found much acceptance among scholars (his thesis is argued against in Becking 1999). The entire discussion of the originator of the inscription is summarized in Hagelia 2009, 32–43.

father, the king of Israel breached the treaty hinted at in the fragmentary opening lines and invaded Aram. The national deity, Hadad, responded by making Hazael king.

III. With Hadad's support, Hazael went to battle with Israel/Samaria and its vassal Judah (the "house of David") and subjugated both, killing their respective rulers.

IV. The final lines are too broken to interpret, but contain more militaristic language. The few letters extant on line 12 may indicate a regime change in Samaria; Biran and Naveh feasibly restore "[and Jehu ruled over Is[rael]" (1995b, 17).

7.2.2 Vocalization and Translation

- 1] M R. ' [²⁵] *wa-gazar*²⁶ [
2]. ' *abi* . *yissaq*²⁷ [. ' *immih*²⁸ . *bi-hi*] *tlaḥ ḥ amih* . *bi-* ' ²⁹

25. A minority of scholars reconstruct *wy'mr* . ' *mry* "And Omri said" here (cf. Lipiński 1994, 89–90). This reconstruction is feasible (especially the verb), but hypothetical. The fragmentary nature of the opening lines of the inscription is unfortunate since they would undoubtedly inform our understanding of Samaritan-Damascene relations in the first half of the ninth century.

26. The appearance of the root *gzar* here suggests a treaty (Biran and Naveh 1993, 13, and several others after them). Against the majority of scholars, I speculate that the opening lines describe an alliance between Samaria and Aram-Damascus in the days of Hazael's "father" Hadadezer—an alliance that was broken upon the death of Hadadezer, if this inscription is trustworthy.

27. I translate *ysq* (line 2) and *yhk* (line 3) as circumstantial imperfects, with *ysq* here being the more problematic of the two. I suspect that lines 2 and 3 have the same overall construction, however: "And my father X [verb in *waw* consecutive], going (up) [...]" See p. 286 n. 31 for more on these two prefix-conjugation verbs that lack a *waw*.

28. Biran and Naveh (1995b, 12–14) restore '*lwh* "against him" as the preposition here, and are followed by several other commentators. This restoration is based on the idea that the opening lines of the inscription describe a conflict between Hazael's "father" and the king of Samaria. I prefer to restore '*mh* "with him," again suggesting that the opening lines describe an alliance between the two rulers. This restoration is, of course, hypothetical.

29. Only the lower right stroke of the letter after *aleph* is preserved, which most readers have taken as a *beth* (Schniedewind 1996, 77; Lemaire 1998, 3; Na'aman 2000b, 96; Kottsieper 2007, 109). But H. D. D. Parker points out that the stroke perceived to be the foot of the *beth* is too high on the line to make such a reading likely (2013, 132 n. 580). Other possibilities include a *peh* (Biran and Naveh 1995b, 13), or a *lamed* or *yod* (Hagelia 2006, 56). Most restorations involve a GN (Abel or Aphek are feasible candidates) or another instance of '*by* "my father." With several viable options and only one clearly preserved radical (assuming the first *beth* is a preposition), I prefer to leave this unrestored. Na'aman points out that if Abel is correct it must have been chosen deliberately for the purpose of justifying Hazael's

- 3 *way-yiškab*³⁰ . 'abi . *yihhak*³¹ . 'il [. 'abahātih] . *way-yi'ul* . *malk-yi[š*
 4 *rā'il* . *qadm*³² . *bi-'arq* . 'abi [. *way-yi*] *hamlik* . *hadad* [.] 'i[yyatī .
 5 'anā³³ . *way-yihhak* . *hadad* . *qadm*ay [. wa]'-'appuq . min . šib['at qirw
 6 ay . mulki . wa'-'aqtul . mala[kin šib]'in³⁴ . 'ārray . 'a[lpay . ri

aggression. He writes, “The reference to the city of Abel (assuming that this is the correct restoration of the end of line 2) is not accidental. The city’s full name, Abel-beth-maacah, testifies to its Aramaic nature and to its character as an Aramaic enclave in northern Israel. An Israelite king must have attacked it—probably because of its cooperation with the Aramaic kingdoms to its north—and attempted to conquer it. We must not forget that the Aramaic inscription was erected at Tel Dan, and the mention of Abel as the pretext for the Aramaic attack was probably meant to justify the conquest of its neighbour, Dan” (Na’aman 2000b, 98).

30. With most scholars, I treat *wyškb* (line 3), *wy'l* (line 3), [*wy*] *hmlk* (line 4), *wyhk* (line 5), [*w*] *pq* (line 5), *w'qtl* (line 6), and *w'sm* (line 9) as so-called *waw*-consecutive forms. This inscription, combined with the evidence from the Zakkur Stele, strongly suggests that the *waw*-consecutive construction did exist in Old Aramaic. For more on this, see Tropper 1997; Knapp 2014a, 106–9.

31. I interpret this term as a circumstantial imperfect, specifically “an imperfect that expresses the finality or the consequence of the action signified by the preceding verb, without the use of any coordinating conjunction” (Lipiński 1994, 91; he translates “so as to ...”). Muraoka interprets both *yhk* and *ysq* as prefix-conjugation preterite verbs, and uses them to argue against the use of the *waw* consecutive in this inscription (1995, 19–20; also Muraoka and Rogland 1998). Both can be interpreted differently, however, and I consider both as fulfilling a grammatical function distinct from the “consecutive” prefix-conjugation verbs. For a more thorough argument against Muraoka, see Tropper 1994, 489–92; also Emerton 1997, 431–35.

32. With Kottsieper (2007, 113–14), I interpret *qdm* as a GN located in northern Transjordan, in the Hauran region (cf. Müller 1978, 61). This region encompassed Ramoth-Gilead, and thus this section of the Tel Dan Inscription likely refers to the skirmish between Hazael and J(eh)oram of Judah, described in 2 Kgs 8:28–29. The GN *qdm* occurs in various biblical texts, including Gen 25:6 and Num 23:7, but it is nearly always misinterpreted as the simple directional “east.” My provisional vocalization *qadm* simply interprets this as a qatl noun pattern, assuming it is related to BH *qedem* “east.”

Despite near unanimity among previous commentators in interpreting *qdm* as an adverb “formerly, previously,” a close reading of the text militates against this (Knapp 2014a). First, this requires treating the verb *wy'l* as a pluperfect, while elsewhere in Northwest Semitic the use of the *waw* consecutive implies sequential, not prior, action. Second, this would necessitate reading a *non sequitur* in the text, wherein the author clumsily inserts an account of Hazael’s “father’s” reign in between the narration of the father’s death and Hazael’s subsequent coronation. Finally, the singular *qdm* is never used adverbially in Aramaic; only the plural form *qdm(y)n* is used in this way.

33. The clause-ending 'nh “me” is peculiar, though it seems to appear also in line 2 of the Zakkur Stele: 'š . 'nh . 'nh.

34. This restoration follows Biran and Naveh 1995b, 12–13; note that only a tiny portion

- 7 *kb . wa-²alpay . parrāš [. wa-qatalit³⁵ . 'iyyat . yahû]rām³⁶ . bar . ['ah'āb .*
 8 *malk . yiśrā'il . wa-qata[lit . 'iyyat . 'ah az]yahû . bar . [yahûrām . wā-²ahpu*
 9 *k³⁷ . bayt-dāwid³⁸ . wa-²-²ašim ['i*
 10 *yyat . 'arq . hum . li-[*
 11 *'ah arin . W L H [ma*
 12 *lak . 'al . yiś[rā'il*
 13 *maš š ar . 'al [*

of the *lamed* and *'ayin* (before and after the break, respectively) are preserved. For the significance of this restoration, cf. Suriano 2007, 167–71.

35. Numerous scholars have questioned how to reconcile Hazael's claim that he "killed" Ahaziah and Joram (if the restorations of lines 7–8 are correct; given how little one needs to restore in line 8, the common restoration, which I follow, is quite probable) with the biblical claim that Jehu killed both. Schniedewind proposed the idea that Hazael and Jehu conspired together, and since Hazael was the superior partner he could credibly claim that he "killed" them because Jehu, who actually carried out the deeds, was acting as his agent (1996, 84–85; this idea is presented at more length in Stith 2008, 90–99). A less frequently cited explanation is that the verb *qtl/qt l* does not necessarily mean "kill," but more broadly "defeat," like the Akkadian *dāku*. For this explanation, see Yamada 2000, 317–19.

36. Alternatively, one might restore simply *ywrm* "Yawram (= Joram)" here (cf. Schniedewind 1996, 77, who also restored *ywrm* in line 8). The Hebrew Bible mostly consistently renders the theophoric element of the northern kings as *yw*, while maintaining *yhw* for the southern kings. It would be interesting to see whether this inscription differentiated between a northern "Joram" and a southern "Jehoram"; unfortunately the only preserved Israelite theophoric element is the final *-yhw* of Ahaziah of Judah in line 8, which is not very informative.

37. Most commentators restore *[ml]/k . bytdwd*, "[kin]g of the house of David," here. Dion, however, points out that in "Old Aramaic as in Hebrew and other Northwest Semitic languages, מלך never is followed by 'the house of So-and-so,' and the rule is the same in the Assyrian inscriptions when they refer to smaller neighbours and vassals" (1999, 152). He restores *[wyh]/k . bytdwd*, translating "[and walk]ed away the House of David" (1999, 149). I agree with his argument against restoring *[ml]/k*, but I am more persuaded by Millard's restoration (COS 2.39:162 n. 10), which I follow here. See also Younger 2005, 253–54.

38. The precise meaning of "house of David" (and other contemporary "house of PN" phrases) continues to be debated. While undoubtedly referring to the kingdom of Judah (and, if this still needs to be said, undoubtedly referring to the King David of Judah of the previous century), the precise criteria for when this term was used remain elusive. "House" could refer to a dynasty in this situation, but the mention of "Jehu (Iaua) of the House of Omri (Ḫumri)" (RIMA 3, 48 A.O.102.8 lines 26"–27") on Shalmaneser III's Black Obelisk registers against this since it was presumably common knowledge that Jehu was a usurper not from the royal bloodline. One suggestion that merits further exploration is whether "house of PN" was used of kingdoms in a vassal situation; Judah clearly served Israel in this function during the ninth century, at the time of this inscription. Alternatively, "house of PN" could simply be an Aramean way of referring to certain political entities (which was adopted by the Assyrians in some instances). For more on this phrase see Couturier 2001.

1] ... [] Now he had cut [
2] my father, going up [with him while he was f]ighting at/with ... [
3 And my father lay down, going to [his fathers.] And the king of I[s]rael
entered
4 Qedem, in the land of my father. [And] Hadad [ma]de m[e] king—
5 me! And Hadad went before me, [and] I went out from the sev[en citi]es
6 of my kingdom, and I killed [seve]nty ki[n]gs], harnessers of [thousands of
char]iots
7 and thousands of riders. [And I killed Jo]ram son of [Ahab],
8 king of Israel, and I kil[l]ed Ahaz[iah son of [Jehoram, and I overthro]w
9 the house of David, and I set [
10 their land into [
11 others ... [ru]led
12 over Is[r]ael
13 siege upon [

7.3 APOLOGETIC ANALYSIS

As I will discuss more below in §7.4, the apologetic nature of the Tel Dan Inscription differs markedly from that of the other texts under investigation in this study. In fact, it is perhaps a misnomer to refer to the inscription as an apology, especially a royal apology, using the definition established in §1.4.4. I do not mean to suggest that this inscription was composed for the purpose of defending Hazael's legitimacy. Nevertheless, the text merits inclusion in this study because one can see the reflexes of Hazael's apologetic rhetoric in this text. While speculative, I suggest that Hazael commissioned more directly apologetic texts—perhaps something akin to the Autobiography of Hattusili III—in defense of his seizure of the throne, and if so, the rhetoric of those texts permeated the rest of his inscriptions, even those composed for other reasons. Even if this speculation is incorrect, it is clear that Hazael adopted a defensive posture in his royal rhetoric, and one can see this defensive posture in the Tel Dan Inscription.

Hazael's inscription, as well as those of Esarhaddon and Nabonidus that we will look at in the following two chapters, differ from the previously examined texts in another way with regard to apologetic analysis. Whereas the apologetic mode of the Hittite and biblical apologies reveals itself upon a close reading of the texts alone, that is, internal analysis, the defensive nature of the Tel Dan Inscription is revealed almost entirely through reading it in concert with non-Aramean sources, that is, external analysis. The inscription remains ambiguous in many respects, but fortunately with the help of the biblical and Assyrian material concerning Hazael we can make educated guesses about several of the allegations against this enig-

matic figure. We may also confidently say that, despite his biblical legacy as the scourge of Samaria, Hazael's apology worked. He left an indelible mark on the Syrian memory: almost a millennium later, the Jewish historian Josephus wrote, "He [Ben-Hadad = Hadadezer?] was an active man, and had the goodwill of the Syrians, and of the people of Damascus, to a great degree; by whom both Ben-Hadad himself, and Hazael, who ruled after him, are honored to this day as gods, by reason of their benefactions, and their building them temples by which they adorned the city of the Damascenes. They also every day do with great pomp pay their worship to these kings" (*Ant.* 9.4.6, translation following Whiston 1999, 315).³⁹

Hazael's legitimation. Although the royal legitimation in the Tel Dan Inscription is not as elaborate as that in several other apologetic (and some nonapologetic) texts, even in the few preserved lines we see the emphasis on Hazael's legitimacy (cf. Na'aman 2000b, 99). The repetition of "my father," discussed further below, suggests the motif of royal affiliation. More obvious is the motif of divine election in line 4, "Hadad [ma]de m[e] king." The apologist uses the C stem of $\sqrt{mlk}$, thus "make king," which is a special term reserved for crowning someone in unexpected circumstances (Suriano 2007, 165–66; this appears also in Solomon's apology in 1 Kgs 1:43). That the chief Aramean deity Hadad is the subject of the verb reinforces his special election of Hazael. This divine support is validated through Hazael's ensuing achievements in battle, which represent the motif of military success.⁴⁰ Hazael relates that "Hadad went before me" (line 5) into war, and the justice of his cause is further highlighted by the contrast of his rise with the demises of Joram and Ahaziah.

Hazael was not the legitimate successor. The biblical and Assyrian evidence combine to indicate that Hazael's legitimacy was a live issue at the beginning of his reign. Dion, for example, writes, "It would seem, in this light, that Hazael's succession of his father did not go uncontested and was no easy process. . . . Hazael came out the winner, but the difficulties surrounding his accession were remembered, and were eventually turned into a downright accusation of illegitimacy, used by enemy propaganda both in Aššur and in Israel" (1999, 154). The Assyrian annals

39. I also suspect that Hazael's positive image among his people is responsible for his name living on among Arabian tribal leaders in the eighth and seventh centuries BCE. Both Sennacherib and Esarhaddon often mention "Hazael, king of the Arabs." For references, see the indices of RINAP 3/1 and RINAP 4.

40. While recounting the might of his enemies is obviously a rhetorical ploy to make Hazael's post-accession triumphs more incredible, the comment "I killed [seve]nty ki[ngs]" in line 6 may be of particular significance—if the reconstruction is correct. Suriano writes, "The literary motif of killing seventy individuals metaphorically represents the killing of all other claimants to power. The motif itself is probably related to an aspect of succession rites, where 'seventy' kinsmen were required to confer legitimacy on an heir" (2007, 168). This motif appears in the narratives of the coups of Abimelech and Jehu in the Hebrew Bible, as well as with an unnamed Sam'alian usurper in *KAI* 215. See also Fensham 1977.

refer to him as “son of a nobody” while the biblical record suggests that he was a member of his predecessor’s inner circle, perhaps an advisor or military officer. Moreover, Hazael does not appear with a patronymic in any extant inscription. Hazael’s lineage, therefore, must have been a hindrance to his accession to the Aramean throne.

In light of this, it is fascinating that Hazael refers three times in this short inscription to “my father” (lines 2, 3, 4). Athas uses this as the main argument in his case, against the traditional interpretation, that Hazael is not the author of the Tel Dan Inscription (Athas 2003, 265; followed by Staszak 2009, 73). This goes too far, however.⁴¹ The mentions of Joram and Ahaziah in lines 7–8 pinpoint Hazael as the author, as the scholarly consensus holds. So what does Hazael mean by this, and who is the “father”? Four suggestions have been offered:⁴²

- (1) Hazael does not use “father” literally, but refers to the previous ruler—likely Hadadezer—as “father” to establish his legitimacy. The term *ʾab* may mean not only father, but also predecessor, whether in terms of genealogy or vocation.⁴³ The use of the term “father” in Northwest Semitic need not always be literal; it may not be coincidence that the prime example of this comes from another apology under investigation in this study, where David calls Saul “my father” (יָאֵב, 1 Sam 24:12[11]).⁴⁴ Lemaire, a proponent of this idea, concludes that “one should not be surprised that Hazael, whose father is not known, could call Hadadezer: ‘my father.’ It was a traditional way to present oneself as a legitimate successor” (1998, 6).⁴⁵
- (2) Hazael was a son of the previous king—likely Hadadezer—but he was not first in line for the succession. He could have been a younger brother or

41. For example, Staszak argues that in the A fragment of the Tel Dan Inscription the first-person voice belongs to Ben-Hadad II, but in the B fragment the voice is that of Hazael (2009). This is hard to accept.

42. Stith (2008, 54–61) breaks down the possible interpretations slightly differently.

43. In 2 Kgs 2:12 Elisha calls Elijah “my father.” Another interesting use of the term, and again within the locus of events surrounding Samaria and Aram-Damascus in the late ninth century BCE, is that of an unnamed Samarian king who calls Elisha “my father” in 2 Kgs 6:21.

44. Admittedly, in the David narrative this may be a reference to his status as the king’s son-in-law; see §5.3 above.

45. But see Younger’s response to Lemaire’s idea (2005, 248–50). Unfortunately, Younger does not himself take a stance on Hazael’s use of “father.” After surveying some of the evidence and questioning Lemaire’s arguments, Younger abruptly switches topics and does not return to the issue.

Kottsieper supports Lemaire’s idea, but construes it somewhat differently: “Thus obviously Hazael used the term ‘father’ in a figurative meaning: His predecessor was his patron who had brought him to his high position and patronized him” (2007, 119).

illegitimate half-brother of a crown prince whose right or ability to rule was questioned (perhaps because of frailty, thus providing the basis of the story of sickly Ben-Hadad in 2 Kgs 8:7–15). This idea has the advantage of reconciling the biblical evidence with that of the Tel Dan Inscription. When their father died, Hazael murdered his legitimate (half-)brother and took the throne for himself. Especially if Hazael's mother were not a wife of Hadadezer, it could be that the Assyrian designation "son of a nobody" was a pointed reference to his illegitimate status as a by-blow.

- (3) Hazael was not a son of Hadadezer *per se*, but belonged to a subsidiary royal branch (cf. Yamada 2000, 312; Na'aman 2002, 207). This, too, would make Hazael the assassin of the legitimate heir, but he could still consider himself a true son in "a broad sense" (Yamada 2000, 312).
- (4) Hazael refers to his literal father here, but the father is not a member of the dynasty of Hadadezer of Aram-Damascus. Suriano suggests, "It is possible that Hazael's father was an important leader of an Aramean tribe during the time of Hadadezer" (2007, 165).⁴⁶ There are some distinct advantages to this interpretation. First, such a usurpation could explain the dissolution of the Syrian coalition. If a rival claimant dispatched Hadadezer and assumed the throne, one can see why the other coalition members would have forsaken their allegiances. Also, reading Qedem in line 4 as a toponym bolsters this idea. According to this understanding, Hazael was not a native Damascene, but part of a tribe that inhabited the fringe region outside.⁴⁷ The disadvantage of this idea is that it involves speculation on several levels—this requires a tribal understanding that we might be imposing upon the Aramean confederation; we know little about the intricacies of the makeup of Aram-Damascus.

Each of these options is feasible and without further evidence we must refrain from speaking in certainties (see Sasson 1996, 554). I presently find option 1 the most persuasive (perhaps to be combined with option 3); it seems to pose the fewest difficulties when considering all the evidence together. Nevertheless, any of the above is plausible. Most important for the purposes of this study, in each of the above-mentioned scenarios Hazael is not the expected successor. The repeated ref-

46. He later writes, "Upon the death of Hadadezer, the Aramean tribal leader Hazael was able to defeat his rivals and claim the throne of Aram-Damascus. The fluidity of seminomadic tribal elements within a patrimonial society fits well with the aggressive and mobile character of Hazael, who may have conquered various tribal groups before he eventually seized control of Aram-Damascus" (Suriano 2007, 174).

47. Interestingly, this idea was first adumbrated by Biran and Naveh: "If קדם is a geographical designation, Hazael might have been the son of a ruler in the Land of Qedem; this brings to mind the name Hazael 'king of the Arabs' from the reigns of Sennacherib and Esarhaddon" (1995b, 18 n. 26).

erences to “my father,” whether literal or not, clearly result from a need to convince the audience that his kingship is legitimate. This issue is also intertwined with the following allegation of malfeasance.

Hazael murdered his predecessor. This allegation, too, stems not from a critical reading of the Tel Dan Inscription—the subject is not broached—but from the Hebrew Bible. 2 Kings 8:7–15 records a meeting between Elisha and Hazael, in which Elisha foretells that Hazael will become king of Aram and will devastate Samaria during his reign. Apparently emboldened by this oracle, Hazael returned home, “And on the following day he took the covering, and he dipped (it) in water, and he spread (it) over [Ben-Hadad’s = Hadadezer’s?⁴⁸] face, and he died. And Hazael ruled in his place” (8:15). I suspect that this passage was composed not long after the events in question.⁴⁹ But even if one assumes that the Elisha cycle is a late critique and remains skeptical of the historical claims within these stories (see Van Seters 1983, 303–6), the mention of an assassination here deserves to be taken seriously. The correspondence of Hazael’s usurpation in the Hebrew Bible with the contemporary Assyrian account suggests that the writer of the prophetic account did not fabricate the story out of whole cloth, but at worst molded the story according to a known tradition. Furthermore, when evaluating Hazael’s apology, we do not need a definitive answer to whether the tradition of Hazael murdering his predecessor was well founded; the knowledge that such a tradition existed is sufficient.

Hazael counters this allegation, not with overt denial, but with a rhetorical strategy best described as omission. He ignores the murder charge and insinuates that the dynasty remains intact. He accomplishes this—assuming the traditional reconstruction is accurate—through the pregnant phrase, “And my father lay down, going to [his fathers]” (line 3). This expression resembles closely the common Deuteronomistic phrase *וַיִּשְׁכַּב עִם־אֲבֹתָיו* “and he lay with his fathers.”⁵⁰ In the Hebrew Bible “the phrase relates to inheritance, specifically succession rights” (Suriano 2010, 42) and “signified dynastic integrity” (Suriano 2007, 165). The expression appears only in contexts where sons succeeded their fathers to the

48. For a synopsis of the debate regarding the biblical “Ben-Hadad II” in this and other passages, see Pitard 1987, 133–38.

49. I broadly subscribe to the idea of a ninth-century “prophetic record” (Campbell 1986; Campbell and O’Brien 2000), though McCarter dates this document to the end of the eighth century (1980a, 18–23).

50. Both Sasson (1995, 16–17) and Suriano (2010, 40–41; 2007, 165) have argued against the widely held, but poorly founded, idea that the biblical expression “he lay with his fathers” (*שָׁכַב עִם־אֲבֹתָיו*) necessarily implies a peaceful death. I question Sasson’s main example, that of Ahab in 1 Kgs 22:40, since I suspect the description of his death earlier in the chapter derives from a separate prophetic source that is chronologically displaced and belongs with the later Jehoahaz material (see above, §7.1). Nevertheless, Amaziah “lay with his fathers” after being assassinated (2 Kgs 14:20–22), which militates against this theory.

throne and therefore implies the integrity of the dynasty.⁵¹ It is used to bolster the successor's legitimacy; that a king lies with his fathers asserts that the king was not deposed and that he joined his forebears in the ancestral tomb. Most importantly, it implies that nothing untoward occurred in conjunction with the dynasty's continuance. This being the case, Hazael's utilization of this phrase must be a deliberate rhetorical strategy. Suriano explains it well: "how does this formulaic expression relate to Hazael? According to the Hebrew Bible and Assyrian sources, Hazael was a usurper, so it may seem odd that he would use terminology implying dynastic succession. The frequent references to his father in the inscription, however, show that Hazael's political legitimacy was a matter of perspective" (2007, 165). Hazael implies that the people need not concern themselves with any assassination that may or may not have happened; Aram has a king and the leadership is secure.⁵²

The nature of this accusation lends itself perfectly to Hazael's response. Barring a skillfully performed autopsy by an Aramean forensic team, an assassination like that described in 2 Kgs 8 would be undetectable. Nothing but rumor could link Hazael to such a murder by smothering, so whatever ambitious machinations one attributed to Hazael, there would be room for doubt—especially if Hadadezer were known to be ailing.⁵³ By not even acknowledging the accusation and instead pointing to the positive aspects of his rule,⁵⁴ Hazael would encourage the audience to ignore their suspicions and focus on the state's stability. This is a savvy rhetorical ploy and apparently an effective one. If the subjects feel secure and content with their lot, they are unlikely to go out of their way to stir up unrest.

Hazael invaded Samarian territory without cause. The final allegation to which Hazael responds in the Tel Dan Inscription takes us somewhat afield of royal apology; it is only indirectly connected with Hazael's legitimacy. On the other hand, it

51. "With each passing epilogue, the lineage that is assembled through the combined number of royal predecessors is part of a greater cultural phenomenon observed in royal genealogies and king lists from the Levant and Mesopotamia dating back at least to the Middle Bronze Age. In these sources, various eponymous figures are collected into an aggregate whole that was used to buttress the lineage of a ruling house" (Suriano 2010, 49–50).

52. For a full analysis of the phrase "lie with fathers," see Suriano 2010, 32–50. For its application to Hazael specifically, see Suriano 2010, 71–72; 2007, 164–66.

53. We can only speculate on the origin of the tradition that Hazael's predecessor was ill, a datum that figures significantly into 2 Kgs 8:7–15 but appears nowhere else. It is tempting to speculate that the tradition ultimately derived from Hazael's court, where it would have served a useful apologetic function. Illness could disqualify someone for the office of king; kings had to exude an aura of strength, and disease could also be a symptom of divine displeasure. Thus a king's illness could render him vulnerable to usurpation for both physical and ideological reasons.

54. This is the rhetorical strategy known as bolstering according to the terminology employed by Ware and Linkugel (1973, 277–78) and Benoit (1995, 77).

is the accusation for which this text was composed as a deliberate apology, and it can be deduced from the provenance of the artifact itself. The basalt fragments on which we find the inscription were part of a triumphal stele, presumably erected shortly after Hazael wrested Dan from Samarian control and annexed it to Aram.⁵⁵ This military action can appropriately be called an invasion since Dan appears to have been within traditional Samarian territory,⁵⁶ and as such it required legitimation. The invasion must have looked particularly dubious in light of the recent coalition in which both Damascus and Samaria participated. Hazael seems to draw attention to this coalition in the fragmentary opening of the Tel Dan Inscription, suggesting that he intended to respond to this charge directly. He argues that he is not an illegitimate conqueror but a victim of betrayal, who is attempting to redress earlier wrongs.

Since Biran and Naveh (1995b, 13), scholars have accepted that Hazael refers to a preexisting treaty in the broken opening lines of the Tel Dan Inscription. The Aramaic term *gʾr* “cut,” which appears in line 1, is used in treaty contexts and functions as the equivalent of the Hebrew כרת (ברית) “cut (a covenant).” Since these lines precede the notice of the death of his “father,” he presumably is referring to a treaty in his father’s lifetime. I expect that this refers to the alliance often mentioned in Shalmaneser’s annals, the Syrian coalition. Hazael then narrates the death of his “father,” which the king of Samaria attempted to exploit by breaking the treaty and invading Aram: “And the king of I[s]/rael entered Qedem in the land of my father” (lines 3–4).⁵⁷ By asserting that Joram of Samaria was the aggressor, Hazael suggests that he was drawn into a war not of his making. Aram is the victim here, not Samaria. Although Hazael did advance into Samarian territory, this was a justifiable counter-offensive to Joram’s treacherous invasion of “the land of my father,” that is, traditional Aramean territory. Samaria’s breach of the alliance put Hazael on the defensive and once the treaty was dissolved any Samarian city became a fair target.⁵⁸

55. There is no explicit reference to Hazael conquering Dan, but that he did so is entirely reasonable, even inevitable, from the biblical references to his conquests in Samarian territory (2 Kgs 8:12; 10:32–33; 13:22).

56. The famous passage of Jeroboam’s golden calves being erected at Bethel and Dan demonstrates that Dan was considered the northern limit of the state. This text almost certainly derives from an historical memory (Cross 1973, 73–75). Note also 1 Kgs 22:3, quoted below.

57. Although Hazael does not expound on the Samarian king’s breach of the treaty and attempt to exploit the Aramean interregnum, I think this interpretation would have been inevitable to his audience. The description of friendly relations between the two states during the period of the previous rulers, immediately followed by the notice of the Aramean predecessor’s death and a Samarian invasion, does not require any further explanation of the illegitimacy of Samaria’s actions.

58. See also Kottsieper, who writes, “It was not an unjustified aggression but a justified

Interestingly, the pertinent passages in 1–2 Kings give a diametrically opposed version of events. Though no mention is made of alliance, Hazael is portrayed as the aggressor in the hostilities between Aram and Samaria. The initial conflict⁵⁹ occurs in Ramoth-gilead in the Transjordan—the region that Hazael claims Joram invaded.⁶⁰ However, the report in 1 Kgs 22 describes this as a traditionally Samarian region: “And the king of Israel said to his servants, ‘Do you know that Ramoth-gilead is ours? But we are doing nothing to take it from the hand of the king of Aram’” (1 Kgs 22:3). Whether or not Hazael desired to legitimate himself to the citizens of Samaria (see §7.4 below), this reinforces the charge to which Hazael responds in the Tel Dan Inscription. Hazael’s reign commenced with a war against Aram’s erstwhile ally, Samaria. Since Hazael was widely perceived in the unflattering role of usurper, his detractors probably required little convincing to view him as a warmonger as well. But in the Tel Dan Inscription Hazael seeks to persuade his audience that Samaria provoked the conflict. Any irregularities in his succession were a product of, not the cause of, the growing turmoil. It is worth noting that Hazael’s version of events also contradicts that of most scholars, as can be seen in table 8.

Although the combination of Assyrian and biblical evidence does suggest that Hazael’s accession was more irregular than the Tel Dan Inscription would have one believe, there is little evidence to help us judge which side is the more truthful in terms of who started the war. If anything, the circumstantial evidence that Jehu submitted to Assyria immediately after taking the Samarian throne might suggest that he attempted to capitalize on Hazael’s alienated state (and, on the other side, it would be odd for Hazael to lead his isolated Aramean army on an invasion of Samaria when Shalmaneser’s massive force still had its sights set on Damascus). But such a judgment goes beyond what we may confidently conclude with the limited sources at our disposal, as well as beyond the confines of this study.

7.4 THE *SITZ IM LEBEN* OF THE TEL DAN INSCRIPTION

Both of the primary issues associated with the *Sitz im Leben* of the Tel Dan Inscription, the audience to whom it was addressed and the date of the stele’s erection, are difficult to establish with precision. The discussion of both of these, however,

reaction to the guile of the Israelite king who attacked Aram despite the treaty he concluded before” (2007, 118).

59. As noted above in §7.1, contrary to the scholarly consensus I hold that there is little evidence of prior hostility between Samaria and Aram-Damascus. Thus the Samarian invasion (as Hazael describes it) sunders peaceful relations and begins a war.

60. For evidence that the Qedem of the Tel Dan Inscription refers to the northern Transjordan, the region including Ramoth-gilead, see Knapp 2014a, 110–13.

Table 8. Hazael’s Version of the Events of His Accession Compared to the General Scholarly Consensus

Hazael’s Version of Events	Generally Accepted Scholarly Version of Events ^a
1. Hadadezer dies 2. Joram invades Aramean-controlled Qedem, thus dissolving the Syrian coalition 3. Hazael is appointed king by Hadad	1. Hazael murders Hadadezer 2. Hazael usurps the throne, thus dissolving the Syrian coalition 3. Hazael attacks Samarian-controlled Ramoth-gilead (ca. 842 BCE)

a. See for example Pitard 1987, 145–46; White 1997, 55–58; Stith 2008, 37–110. For a different take on the entire constellation of events that transpired see Astour 1971, though few still accept Astour’s argument.

is augmented by an examination of the inscription’s literary genre, so we will first look briefly at this.

The absence of the opening and closing lines prevent us from drawing definitive conclusions about the literary genre of the Tel Dan Inscription, but an educated guess is possible. The text is clearly a royal inscription, but this is a broad category that includes multiple literary subgenres with significant differences. Building inscriptions⁶¹ were common in Mesopotamia; the Assyrian annals are typically the main part of long building inscriptions, deposited at the dedication of new edifices.⁶² But building inscriptions were uncommon in the Levant (to judge from what has thus far been unearthed), and were rarely inscribed on large steles such as that on which we find the Tel Dan Inscription. We may easily exclude this from consideration. More worthy of inspection here is the memorial inscription, typically composed near the end of a monarch’s reign and reflecting on his achievements.⁶³ Various scholars have asserted that this is the literary genre of the Tel Dan Inscription (Schniedewind 1996, 85; Lemaire 1998, 11; Noll 1998, 8; Dion 1999, 150; Suriano 2007, 171). This assertion may be correct, but the extant text suggests otherwise; everything preserved deals with the war between Aram and Samaria. Even the last two lines of the text, though only preserving a few words, show that the subject has not changed—the two letters prior to the break in line

61. Many refer to building inscriptions as dedicatory inscriptions. I eschew the latter term because nearly every type of inscription was dedicated to a deity (including all three types I mention here). For example, the Zakkur inscription begins, “The [st]ele that King Zakkur of [Ha]math and Lu’ash established for ’Iluwer” (line 1), but it appears to be a memorial inscription (J. M. Miller 1974, 11–12).

62. For example, Esarhaddon’s Nineveh A, which I discuss in chapter 8.

63. For a discussion of memorial inscriptions, see J. M. Miller 1974.

12, *yš/š*, suggest the reading “Is[rael],” and the only extant word in line 13, *maš š ar* “siege,” implies a military context. Although the accident of preservation could account for the focus on Samaria and warfare, it would be odd for Hazael, who subjugated much of Syria-Palestine, to let this region so dominate a broader retrospective text. The more likely case is that Hazael’s text is a victory inscription, composed to commemorate the conquest of the city. This idea, too, has been proposed by several scholars; Na’aman likens the Tel Dan Inscription to Assyrian “victory stelae which they [Assyrian kings] had erected in the places they reached on their campaigns, in order to relate their triumphs to the gods of Assyria and to commemorate their achievements before the local inhabitants” (2000b, 94; mention of a victory stele is also made in Lipiński 1994, 85 [without the benefit of the B fragments]; Biran 1998, 479; Finkelstein and Silberman 2002, 273; Niehr 2011, 346). In addition to accounting for the extant text, the location of this stele—in Dan—all but demands this interpretation. Why Hazael would erect a memorial stele near the end of his reign in an annexed city raises several questions.

The literary genre of victory inscription allows for multiple possibilities regarding audience. As noted by Na’aman, such inscriptions relate the ruler’s triumphs to the gods, and Hazael likely commissioned the inscription at least partially for their benefit. But Hazael doubtless intended the inscription for a human audience as well. Both the physical location of the stele and its contents suggests that its message was known to the residents of Dan.⁶⁴ The text may thus have constituted an attempt to win the allegiance of citizens whose self-identification as Samarian or Aramean was open to debate. I speculate that the conquest of Dan was accomplished without widespread destruction of the city and that Hazael attempted to assimilate the people with as little coercion as possible. By presenting his *casus belli* for invading Samaria, Hazael portrayed himself to his new subjects as a legitimate ruler whose sovereignty of the city was divinely sanctioned.

We next turn to the date of the stele. Since there is general consensus among interpreters that Hazael, who ruled from ca. 843–805 BCE, authored the inscription, most agree with a date in the latter half of the ninth century.⁶⁵ One can confirm this general dating through paleographical analysis.⁶⁶ Few scholars have attempted to locate the text with further specificity, but those who do present two different

64. I do not mean to imply that the majority of the Danites were literate and could read the inscription, only that its contents were disseminated among the local population; see §1.4.1.

65. For example, Hagelia meticulously reviews every previous discussion of the date of the inscription (2009, 98–102), then concludes, “the actual date of the stele has been much debated, but a date in the latter part of the ninth century has become conventional. Without adding anything to what has been argued previously, dating the text to the latter part of the ninth century seems reasonable” (2009, 102).

66. This has been shown most recently by H. D. D. Parker (2013, 125–37), who provides an exhaustive list of other scholars’ results for dating the inscription according to paleography. She herself concludes that it dates “from the mid to late ninth century BCE” (2013, 130).

options: either in the 830s, shortly after the coups of Hazael and Jehu (so Na'aman 2000b, 100, 104), or in the latter part of Hazael's reign (so Biran and Naveh 1995b, 18; Lemaire 1998, 10–11; Dion 1999, 148; Suriano 2007, 175; Stith 2008, 32–35). Since Hazael erected the stele to commemorate the conquest of Dan, the question amounts to, When did Hazael begin to annex the cities of Samaria? We lack direct evidence for this—the biblical record says little of Jehu's reign after his coup, and after Shalmaneser leaves Damascus in 837, Assyria does not reenter Syria-Palestine until the eighth century, so we lack any pertinent annals from there—and thus any conclusion must be tentative. Nevertheless, I support Na'aman's suggestion that Hazael's invasion of Samaria occurred not long after the Assyrian army removed itself. Most scholars assume that Hazael's beleaguered army survived only because of the timely departure of Shalmaneser, an idea epitomized by Galil: "Although the conquest of Damascus was within reach of the Assyrians, Shalmaneser III seems to have preferred to eschew it, leaving a weak, defeated king on the throne in Damascus in order to prevent a political imbalance in Syria" (Galil 2002, 54).⁶⁷ But this idea originates more from Assyrian propaganda, which construes any defeat as victory, than from evidence. The fact is that Shalmaneser was focused on the destruction of Damascus—with every other power in the region already subjugated, he spent two years campaigning against the Aramean capital and surely put major expense into besieging the city—but Hazael withstood him. If Assyrian victory seemed a foregone conclusion, Hazael's own resistance was peculiar—why not submit, like all his neighbors, and pay tribute? Hazael must have opted to fight Shalmaneser because he believed, correctly, in his ability to win. The aftermath of the conflict also suggests Hazael's military prowess. Shalmaneser never returned to Syria-Palestine. Meanwhile, Hazael exercised hegemony over almost the entire region. We know that Aram-Damascus was the major power in the region prior to Shalmaneser's arrival (as evidenced by Hadadezer's leadership of the Syrian coalition, especially after Hamath's apparent submission), that Hazael defeated Shalmaneser, and that Hazael then spread Aramean dominion over a large region, from northern Syria to Philistia. In light of this, I suspect that Hazael asserted Aramean might at the onset of his rule, likely in the 830s. Dan, being in the periphery between Samaria and Damascus, was probably one of his earliest targets.

Of course, the primary purpose for investigating the *Sitz im Leben* of each text examined in this study is to illuminate its apologetic tone, and we have not

67. For other examples of this thinking, see Tadmor 1975, 39–40; Pitard 1987, 148 ("Damascus had survived—barely"); Lemaire 1991, 99 ("... cette première campagne assyrienne contre le royaume de Damas semble avoir été surtout une démonstration de force visant à impressionner Hazael, sans vraiment chercher à soumettre militairement et complètement le royaume de Damas"); Stith 2008, 102–10. Yamada provides a somewhat stronger portrayal of Hazael's defense but still suggests that he only achieved hegemony over his neighbors in the latter part of his reign, after the domestic revolt in Assyria (2000, 208).

yet done this. Working from the definition of royal apologetic as propaganda produced as defense against specific attacks upon a person's character or conduct, specifically in regard to a monarch's legitimacy (see §1.4.4), one struggles to see why a victory inscription would be composed in such a manner. As noted above, Hazael may have sought to justify his annexation of parts of Samaria to the conquered people, but this is different in essence from legitimizing his position on the Aramean throne. Yet common features of royal apologetic do appear, particularly with the pointed reference to Hazael's divine election and his emphasis on royal affiliation despite his dubious lineage and suspicious connection to his predecessor. How do we explain these apologetic elements?

Two possibilities present themselves. First, it is feasible that Hazael did want to defend his legitimacy to the residents of Dan. It is likely that the rumors of Hazael as a usurper and treaty breaker, which we glimpse in the Assyrian and biblical records, circulated among the conquered people. Addressing these allegations may have been crucial to winning the hearts and minds of the people, showing that their new lord was legitimate, even divinely ordained.

The second possibility requires much less intentionality on Hazael's part. It is possible that the apologetic rhetoric seen in the Tel Dan Inscription only recycled part of a "canon" of rhetoric already employed by Hazael. After assuming the Aramean throne, Hazael doubtless faced a fair amount of resistance. If his reputation in Judah and Assyria was at all indicative of the feelings toward him in Aram-Damascus at the outset of his rule—which is not a given, but I deem it likely—then he would have needed to take pains to assert the propriety of his accession. The most straightforward way of doing this would have been to issue an explanation of his rise to power, an apology in its purest form. One might even speculate that he issued an apology similar to Hattusili's, though of course there is no evidence for this. But even if such a blatant defense never existed, it is likely, almost inevitable, that Hazael adopted certain defensive phrases into his royal rhetoric. The expression "Hadad made me king," featuring the pregnant C-stem use of $\sqrt{mlk}$ (see above, §7.3), may have originally emerged in this way; so also the trope of Hazael having killed seventy kings.

In a well-known article on variants in the inscriptions of Sennacherib, Liverani writes, "The particular (though obvious) compositional procedure of royal inscriptions [was] based on the repeated reutilization of pre-existing textual materials, and on the transfer of entire (even large) passages from text to text" (1981, 225–26). Seventh-century Assyria is not a perfect analogue for ninth-century Aram; we lack sufficient textual material from the latter to compare successive recensions of inscriptions, nor do we have reason to believe that the Aramean scribal apparatus was as extensive as that of Assyria.⁶⁸ But the Arameans may well

68. The chronological gap between Hazael and Sennacherib is, of course, not an obstacle to this analogy. Although Liverani focused on the Sargonids, Hazael's Assyrian

have employed the procedure described by Liverani. The composer of the Tel Dan Inscription likely drew from an “official” version of Hazael’s *res gestae*, or at least a battery of royal rhetoric describing his accession. In this way, the Tel Dan Inscription may not have been composed as an apology for Hazael’s legitimacy, but it could provide us with an example of one all the same by virtue of being a reflex of a more calculated apologetic endeavor.

But we need not be reductionist about the source of the apologetic nature of the Tel Dan Inscription. I suspect that some combination of the previously outlined explanations holds—that the inscription was commissioned with the purpose of legitimizing Hazael’s invasion of Samaria before his newly conquered subjects, and that with this defensive posture motivating the text, the author adopted (deliberately or otherwise) a preexisting justification of Hazael’s takeover of the throne. Here again we see the importance of understanding the quality of apologetic as a rhetorical genre rather than a literary one. Although the author of the Tel Dan Inscription set out to (and did) compose a victory inscription focusing on the just conquest of a new land, its apologetic echoes sound clearly.

contemporary Shalmaneser III employed precisely the same system of reutilizing material in successive inscriptions. But one should still not underestimate the differences between contemporaneous Assyria and Aram.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE ACCESSION OF ESARHADDON

8.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF ESARHADDON'S ACCESSION

ESARHADDON RULED Assyria from 680 to 669 BCE, taking the throne upon the assassination of his father Sennacherib. Of the kings under investigation in this study, he is the one regarded as a usurper by the fewest modern scholars because there is solid evidence that he was designated heir by his father (see pp. 303–4 n. 7 below). This nomination for succession may not even have been irregular.¹ Despite an abundance of texts documenting both his and his father's reigns, many ques-

In addition to the rest of my readers, I would like to thank Jamie Novotny for his many helpful comments on this section.

1. Leichty writes, "The Sargonids had no strict laws of succession. Sitting monarchs designated successors, usually from among their sons" (RINAP 4, 2). Were this the case, the designation of Esarhaddon would have been conventional. Because the sample size of Sargonid successors is so small—five total, two of whom (Aššur-etel-ilāni and Šin-šarra-iškun) are poorly attested—we cannot make firm conclusions about the implicit or explicit rules of royal succession in the Neo-Assyrian Empire, however. Many scholars assume primogeniture was the governing principle of royal succession throughout most, if not all, of the ancient Near East, but this remains an assumption. In favor of primogeniture in Neo-Assyria, it can be noted that although two of the three well-attested Sargonid successors were not eldest sons, both of these designations apparently were objectionable enough to inspire insurrection from the passed-over elder brothers (Urad-Mullissu and Šamaš-šuma-ukin).

That being said, I think a suggestion put forth by Hildegard Lewy merits further inquiry. Lewy writes, "So far as can be judged by those cases in which sufficient information about the royal princes is available ... it appears that the situation in which a king had to choose his successor arose only when his oldest son died before him. If the first-born son was alive, he was by his birthright successor to the throne. None of the younger sons, however, enjoyed a privileged position, and it was, therefore, up to the father to make a choice between them if the natural heir to the throne died. Hence it is reasonable to assume that Aššūr-aḥ-iddina's nomination took place after Sennacherib's first-born son ... Aššūr-nadin-šumi, had perished at the hands of the Elamites" (H. Lewy 1952, 271 n. 39). This theory works well in at least three cases from the ancient Near East—the succession of Solomon (David's eldest son, Amnon, was killed by his brother Absalom); the succession of Esarhaddon, described here; and the succession of Assurbanipal (the silence of the evidence suggests to many that Esarhaddon's eldest son, Šin-nādin-apli, died early in Esarhaddon's reign; see *PNA* 3/I:1138 sub Šin-nādin-apli; Novotny and Singletary 2009, 169).

tions about his origins and accession remain unanswerable. The major source for historical information on his accession is the apology under investigation here, but it presents a heavily biased view. This historical sketch, therefore, attempts to cleave as closely as possible to more detached, nonpropagandistic sources in an effort to remain unprejudiced.

Although we lack critical details as to why Esarhaddon was nominated crown prince, it is possible to form a general outline of what transpired. Sennacherib's eldest son, Aššur-nādin-šumi, may have been the initial choice for crown prince,² but he failed to outlive his father. As one of Sennacherib's many attempts to solve the insoluble problem of how to keep Babylonia in line, he installed Aššur-nādin-šumi as regent there during his fourth campaign, in 700. This state of affairs lasted for six years, until 694 when the Elamites lured Sennacherib's army far to the south, then exploited the absence of the Assyrian military to reclaim Babylon. The Babylonian Chronicle records that Aššur-nādin-šumi was captured and carried off

2. It is taken for granted by nearly all scholars that Aššur-nādin-šumi was Sennacherib's crown prince until his demise, but there is good reason to question this. Two items suggest that he was not expected to succeed his father. First, Aššur-nādin-šumi was old enough to be installed as regent of Babylonia in 700, just four years after Sennacherib himself took office. If he had installed his eldest son as crown prince then in all probability Aššur-nādin-šumi would have been an old man by the time he took office, assuming Sennacherib expected to reign more than a few years. Second, if Sennacherib desired him to rule Assyria someday, it would have been an odd move to elevate him over Babylonia. This placed him far from home where princes could be groomed to rule, and more importantly, we do not have evidence of princes being granted lesser offices to prepare them for greater ones.

Coupled with these points is the fact that we have no valid basis for concluding that Aššur-nādin-šumi was installed as crown prince, a fact that seems to be overlooked by several Assyriologists. For example, Melville writes, "Until solid evidence can be produced to the contrary, I will assume that the eldest son of the king was considered the 'heir apparent' but had to be formally inducted into the *bēt rēdūti* (that is, he had to have been approved by the gods) in order to be crown prince. By this argument, Sennacherib's son, Aššur-nādin-šumi was his only formally designated crown prince until Esarhaddon was named to the office" (Melville 1999, 20). She states that Aššur-nādin-šumi was "formally designated," but no formal designation is extant. Moreover, Sennacherib's inscriptions do not use typical crown prince language ("great [or 'senior'] son of the king, who (resides in) the House of Succession") with him; Sennacherib consistently refers to him as "my eldest son" (*māru rēštū*; see RINAP 3/1, 98 Sennacherib 15 v 5–6, 117 Sennacherib 16 iv 65–66, 134 Sennacherib 17 iv 13–14, 178 Sennacherib 22 iii 72; RINAP 3/2, 48 Sennacherib 42 line 5, 68 Sennacherib 44 line 11). In one brick inscription Sennacherib does refer to him as "my great [or 'senior'] son" (*rabī māriya*) and state that he built a special palace for him (RINAP 3/2, 285 Sennacherib 205 line 3), but even here there is no reference to the House of Succession.

to Elam;³ thereafter he vanishes from the historical record. We must conclude that Aššur-nādin-šumi's future was neither long nor prosperous.⁴

Whatever Aššur-nādin-šumi's erstwhile status, Assyria was left without a crown prince in the ensuing years. Sennacherib responded by razing Babylon in 689,⁵ after which Assyria entered a period of historical darkness. The following decade is filled with uncertainty prior to the accession of Esarhaddon. We know four things about this period: (1) No royal inscriptions from the final years of Sennacherib's reign survive;⁶ the first fifteen years of his reign are amply attested, but the final nine years are nearly invisible. (2) At some point during this period, Sennacherib appointed Esarhaddon as his successor.⁷ (3) Esarhaddon was removed

3. This is recorded in the chronicle extending from Nabû-nāš ir to Šamaš-šuma-ukin; see Grayson 1975a, 78 chronicle 1 ii 36–45; Glassner 2005, 196–99 chronicle 16 ii 35–44.

4. I count myself among those scholars who speculate that Sennacherib's subsequent obliteration of Babylon may have been fueled in part by the demise of his son, though this is not certain. See the following footnote.

5. It is interesting the number of assumptions concerning this event that are treated as fact by the majority of scholars: that Sennacherib unleashed decades of fury onto Babylon at this time (Grayson calls it a "vendetta," *CAH* 3/2, 122), that this was payback for the death of Aššur-nādin-šumi, that this event irreparably damaged Assyrian-Babylonian affairs, etc. In reality, the sacking of Babylon is attested poorly—it is described in only three extant inscriptions of Sennacherib, a fragmentary hexagonal prism (RINAP 3/1, 205–6 Sennacherib 24 vi 1'–16'), the Bavian Inscription (RINAP 3/2, 316–17 Sennacherib 223 lines 43–54), and a stone tablet describing the rebuilding of the *Akitu* House (RINAP 3/2, 248 Sennacherib 168 lines 36–44). It appears also in various chronicles (for specific references see RINAP 3/1, 13–14 n. 29), but in each case the description is laconic. All descriptions of Sennacherib's motivation for destroying Babylon are therefore conjectural. It is feasible that Sennacherib indeed relished his obliteration of Babylon due to his son's unfortunate demise there, but this is not the only available explanation. Is it coincidence that Sennacherib's royal inscriptions dry up at precisely the same time? Perhaps an external event caused a ten-year hiatus in the prosperity of Assyria and Babylonia at this time.

6. The reason for this is uncertain. Sennacherib completed work on his palace at this time, so the lack of sources may simply be a product of the lack of need for further foundation deposits/building inscriptions. There are other gaps in the Assyrian historical record without obvious explanation, such as the first two decades of the reign of Assurbanipal.

7. We have a fragmentary succession treaty of Sennacherib indicating that he did go out of his way to designate a successor. For the treaty, see Parpola 1987, 163–64, 178–80; Parpola treated the same text in Parpola and Watanabe 1988, 18 #3. Although Sennacherib's name is preserved, the name of the appointee is missing. That Esarhaddon was designated crown prince can be inferred from one text dating to his time in this office, however. The inscription Nineveh J, doubtless an Esarhaddon inscription, begins with his royal name Aššur-etel-ilāni-mukin-apli (only the ending GIN-IBILA is preserved, but no other name can be restored here) and declares him "crown prince, who (resides in) the House of Succession" (*mār šarri rabû ša bīt ridûti*, RINAP 4, 61 Esarhaddon 13 line 1). Oddly, despite asserting that "there is every reason to believe that [Sennacherib's succession treaty]

(or removed himself) from Nineveh, apparently in the late 680s. (4) In the month Ṭ ebētu (X, December–January) of 681⁸, Sennacherib was assassinated by one or more of his sons, and after a six-week battle for the throne, Esarhaddon emerged as the new king of Assyria.

Beyond this all our history is conjecture of varying degrees of probability, despite the confident tone historians tend to use when writing about this period. Details of the following sort have become nearly ubiquitous in the scholarship:

- (1) Sennacherib's royal inscriptions subsided during this period due to lack of foreign conflicts, especially on the Babylonian front. Without yearly campaigns, there was little need to compose annals.⁹ In fact, our lack of sources for this period prevents us from drawing firm conclusions about Assyria's foreign or domestic affairs during this time.¹⁰ It is conceivable that the succession problem progressively grew; alternatively, the assassination could have come from out of the blue and provoked the ensuing melee.
- (2) The appointment of Esarhaddon as crown prince superseded a preexisting appointment of Sennacherib's eldest surviving son, Urad-Mullissu.¹¹ While Urad-Mullissu may have considered himself the heir apparent to Sennacherib's throne, we have no reason to think that this was ever made explicit or

concerned the promotion of Esarhaddon," Parpola ignores this evidence (1987, 164). There is no good evidence for the date of Esarhaddon's promotion. Even placing it within the decade of the 680s is not entirely secure; I infer this because given the wealth of sources for the first fifteen years of Sennacherib's reign, it would be remarkable if so momentous an event went unnoted.

8. I follow typical Assyriological convention here, which equates each Mesopotamian year with a single Julian year, even though this is somewhat imprecise. The Mesopotamian year began and ended in mid-March, thus the last few months of 681 here would actually correspond to the first few months of 680, according to the Julian calendar.

9. For example, Frahm writes: "Probably these years [689–681] were a period of relative peace, though it might be more appropriate, especially with regard to Babylonia, to speak of the peace of a graveyard. ... While no major foreign threats endangered the Assyrian hegemony, in the years after 689 the domestic situation became more and more unstable. The reason for this was an increasingly severe struggle for succession which divided the princes at Sennacherib's court" (*PNA* 3/I:1121 sub *Sin-aḫ ḫ ē-eriba* 15'–16').

10. Frame notes the same regarding Babylonia from 689–681: "On the one hand, the relative lack of documentation for this time may be an accident of archaeological discovery; but, on the other hand, it may reflect a period of uncertainty and weakness in Babylonia caused by Assyrian military actions. The few economic texts preserved suggest that life carried on in a relatively normal way" (1992, 61–62).

11. For example, Radner writes of "Sennacherib's decision to select [Esarhaddon] as the replacement of the former crown princes Aššur-nadin-šumi, who had been abducted to Elam, and Urdu-Mullissu, who had fallen out of favour with his father" (*PNA* 1/I:184 sub *Aššūr-etel-ilāni-mukin-apli*).

even that Sennacherib fostered the idea.¹² We also have limited insight into the relationship between Sennacherib and Urad-Mullissu, and what little we do have—which stems from Esarhaddon’s own apology—suggests that it was Esarhaddon, not any of his brothers, who fell out of favor with Sennacherib (see Nin. A i 26–29).

- (3) Sennacherib removed Esarhaddon from Nineveh for Esarhaddon’s own protection due to the jealousy of his brothers.¹³ This, too, is entirely inferential. The only extant record we have of Esarhaddon’s flight from Nineveh is his own description in Nineveh A, and he says nothing about Sennacherib in this context.
- (4) Sennacherib was assassinated by Urad-Mullissu, the son who was next in line after the demise of Aššur-nādin-šumi.¹⁴ Parpola wrote an excellent defense of this, concluding, “This reconstruction closely follows Esarhaddon’s own account of the events ... Surely we are now in a position to finally acquit the harassed king of the murder charge he does not deserve, and convict the man to whom all the evidence points [Urad-Mullissu]” (1980, 175).¹⁵ But while Parpola’s case is compelling, the fragmentary nature of the

12. Kwasman and Parpola (1991, XXVII–XXXIV), followed by Nissinen (1998, 17 n. 59), argue that Urad-Mullissu was declared crown prince at some point near 698, on the basis of sale receipts that mention “Urad-Mullissu, the *mār šarri*.” The title *mār šarri*, however, should be taken literally as “son of the king,” without further implications. This is apparent when read in contrast to various Sargonid texts that explicitly mention the crown prince, all of which use the phrase “great [or ‘senior’] son of the king, who (resides in) the House of Succession” (*mār šarri rabû ša bīt ridûti*, for Esarhaddon see RINAP 4, 61 Esarhaddon 13 i 1; for Assurbanipal see Parpola and Watanabe 1988, 28–58 #6 lines 43, 47, and *passim*; and Borger 1996, 14 Prismen A/F i 2). In addition to this, there are many problems with Kwasman and Parpola’s argument. Despite their assertions to the contrary, there are no straightforward cases of *mār šarri* meaning “crown prince,” and they acknowledge several problems with their theory (two apparent crown princes in 694, a crown prince having been designated one week into Esarhaddon’s reign, Assurbanipal having a crown prince even when his sons were all in their minority, etc.). Lastly, if *mār šarri* refers to the crown prince, how does one denote one of the other princes? In sum, it seems clear that *mār šarri rabû ša bīt ridûti* “great [or ‘senior’] son of the king, who (resides in) the House of Succession” should be equated with “crown prince.”

13. For example: “As the situation worsened, concern for the safety of Esarhaddon grew. Finally, things deteriorated to the point that it seemed necessary to move him out of the city of Asshur and away from his brothers” (Leichty 1995, 951; cf. also Radner 2003, 166–67).

14. For example: “At least two of the brothers, perhaps with help from others, murdered Sennacherib. ... The conspiracy was led by Arad-Ninlil [= Urad-Mullissu], Esarhaddon’s elder brother” (Leichty 1995, 951).

15. Zawadzki supports Parpola’s reconstruction with an intriguing hypothesis: he notes that the account of the assassination of Semiramis given by Nicolaus of Damascus conflicts with other accounts of Semiramis but corresponds well to Parpola’s reconstruction if one

text he cites prevents one from considering his argument beyond doubt (see below, §8.3; also Knapp forthcoming a).

While all of these ideas are feasible, all remain inconclusive. The events leading up to Sennacherib's untimely demise are cloaked in mystery. After the assassination things become clearer; at least, there is broad agreement among the sources.¹⁶ Upon hearing of his father's death, Esarhaddon marched forthwith to Nineveh and entered the interregnal fracas (if Esarhaddon's apology is to be believed, multiple sons of Sennacherib were vying for the kingship at this point).¹⁷ After a few weeks, in the month Addaru (XII, February–March), Esarhaddon prevailed and took the throne. The rebellious brothers fled and escaped “to an unknown land” (*ana māti lā idû, Nin. A i 84*) but Esarhaddon took vengeance upon his adversaries unfortunate enough to remain behind, as he claims, “a hefty punishment I imposed upon them—I wiped out their seed” (*annu kabtu ĕmidsunūtima / uḥ alliqa zēršun, Nin. A ii 10–11*).

Overall, the circumstances of Esarhaddon's promotion to kingship resemble Solomon's accession in several ways. Both were younger sons of the incumbent king and therefore neither was the expected choice of successor.¹⁸ Both were sons of a favored wife who may have played a pivotal role in elevating their child's status.¹⁹ Both had to defeat an elder brother who proclaimed himself king upon their

substitutes the name Sennacherib for Semiramis (Zawadzki 1990). Although a fascinating theory, this too is far from conclusive. Apart from the obvious problem of having to substitute names without any evidence, it could be that Nicolaus's tradition derives from Esarhaddon's own apologetic. It is also worth noting that if later traditions confused Semiramis and Sennacherib, then according to the tradition of Ctesias it was the Esarhaddon character (= Ninyas; cf. Zawadzki 1990, 72) who was responsible for Sennacherib's death!

16. The primary sources here are the Babylonian chronicle from Nabû-nāš ir to Šamaš-šuma-ukīn (Grayson 1975a, 69–87 chronicle 1; Glassner 2005, 193–203 chronicle 16) and Esarhaddon's apology (Nineveh A i 8–ii 11, the text of which appears below). Also extant are four oracle collections relating to events of this time; see Parpola 1997, 1–30 #1–4.

17. “... they girded weapons within Nineveh, without the gods; to exercise kingship they constantly butted heads with one another like goats” (*išših ūma kakkē ina qereb Ninūa balu ilāni / ana epēš šarrūti itti aḥ āmiš ittakkipū lalā'iš Nin. A i 43–44*).

18. Coincidentally, even the name of each demonstrates his status as younger son. Esarhaddon is Aššur-aḥ u-iddina, “Assur has given a brother”; Solomon is שלמה, “He has replaced him” (for interpreting “him” as another son, cf. 2 Sam 11–12).

19. It was long assumed that Esarhaddon's mother Naqī'a played a critical role in Esarhaddon's promotion to crown prince, but Melville has provided a sober reappraisal of the evidence for this (Melville 1999, 16–29). She concludes, “The image we have of Naqia during this early stage in her career does not correspond to that of other scholars who claim that Naqia had overwhelming influence on both her husband and her son. The picture we have is more conservative. None of the evidence would lead us to conclude that during this period Naqia held more power than was normal for a queen/palace woman. Indeed, when

father's demise. Both began the new reign with a brutal suppression of their enemies. It is not surprising, therefore, that their apologies share several apologetic motifs (see Ishida 1991).

8.2 THE TEXT

Esarhaddon's apology serves as a preface to Nineveh A, the longest extant royal inscription of Esarhaddon. Nineveh A is a building inscription composed for the dedication of the armory in Nineveh. Many copies of the text survive; most preserve only portions of the text, but one complete exemplar (BM 121005) exists that serves as an exceptional master text.²⁰ Like many Assyrian royal inscriptions, the text contains a lengthy titulary (i 1–7; ii 12–24), a description of the king's military campaigns (ii 40–v 39), a building report (v 40–vi 43), and concluding exhortations and warnings (vi 44–75). The apology proper consists of a unique introduction to the text (i 8–ii 11), which appears for the first time in this recension of Esarhaddon's annals. The text was composed in a mixed style; the dialect is literary Standard Babylonian rather than the typical annalistic Neo-Assyrian, though the latter does appear sporadically.

8.2.1 Outline

I	i 1–7	Titulary and Introduction
II	i 8–22	Esarhaddon's Legitimate Designation as Crown Prince
III	i 23–44	The Brothers' Godless Rebellion versus Esarhaddon's Pious Humility
IV	i 45–86	Esarhaddon Defeats the Rebels with Divine Support
V	i 87–ii 7	Esarhaddon Ascends the Throne
VI	ii 8–11	Punishment of the Transgressors

I. Since Esarhaddon's apology appears within a royal inscription and is not a self-contained text, one hesitates to read too much into the opening titulary. Still, Nineveh A includes a new twist that seems significant. The first four lines of the text follow typical Assyrian royal formulae, but then a new epithet is introduced:

Esarhaddon was in trouble her only recourse seems to have been to consult oracles on his behalf. It is a testimony to Esarhaddon's wit, ability and perseverance that in spite of strong opposition, he finally attained his objective and was able to ascend the throne after a short, but not entirely successful, civil war (the culprits were not apprehended)" (1999, 29).

20. For a complete catalogue of the exemplars of the text and extensive bibliography, see RINAP 4, 9–11 Esarhaddon 1.

“who from his youth Assur, Shamash, Bēl, and Nabû, Ishtar of Nineveh, (and) Ishtar of Arbela called out his name for the kingship of Assyria” (*ša ultu š eḫērišu Aššur Šamaš Bēl u Nabû / Ištar ša Ninûa Ištar ša Arba-ili / ana šarrûti Aššur ibbû zikiršu*, i 5–7).²¹ This immediately changes the focus from the generic grandeur of the Assyrian monarch and focuses on Esarhaddon’s legitimacy, setting the stage for the next section.

II. The apology commences by acknowledging what may have been the first obstacle on Esarhaddon’s path to the kingship, namely, that he was the youngest of his brothers.²² Esarhaddon purports, however, that his inferior position in the royal line was overruled by the prerogative of both the gods (i 9–10, 13, 17–18) and his father (i 10–14). The joint divine/royal prerogative was acknowledged by the people of Assyria, as well as Esarhaddon’s own brothers (i 15–19). Esarhaddon then entered the House of Succession, further underscoring his legitimacy.

III. Esarhaddon’s brothers, despite swearing an oath to protect Esarhaddon’s kingship (i 18–19), “schemed evil” (*ikappudû lemuttu*, i 25; *ikpudû lemuttu*; i 42) and sought the kingship for themselves. They forsook the divine will and trusted in themselves (i 23–31), actions juxtaposed with Esarhaddon’s humble trust in the gods, whom he actively besought (i 32–37). The gods responded by removing Esarhaddon from Nineveh to protect him from his nullifidian siblings.

IV. From his remove,²³ Esarhaddon heard of the “evil deeds” (*epšētišunu lemnēti*, i 55; cf. i 46–47) of the “usurpers” (*ḥ ammaē*, i 46, 82). Esarhaddon thereupon marched to Nineveh, recruiting an entourage of troops who deserted the rebels (i 70–79) and Assyrian citizens (i 80–81) along the way. The usurpers, seeing the writing on the wall, fled.

V. Esarhaddon took the throne of Nineveh, exercised kingship, and was encouraged by positive oracles.

VI. Esarhaddon took vengeance on those responsible for the usurpers’ sacrilege, annihilating their families.

21. The idea that Esarhaddon’s royal destiny was decreed by the gods while he was still in the womb does appear in two other texts (RINAP 4, 91 Esarhaddon 37 obv. 1’–13’; 97 Esarhaddon 43 obv. 12–16), both of which are undateable, but it does not appear in earlier recensions of the annals.

22. “Of my elder brothers, their youngest brother am I” (*ša aḫ ḫ ēya rabûti aḫ ušunu ḫru anāku*, i 8).

23. The whereabouts of Esarhaddon’s place of refuge/exile are unknown. Esarhaddon was clearly in the west since he traverses Hanigalbat on his way to Nineveh, but beyond this we can only guess. Leichty has suggested tentatively that Esarhaddon went to a kin group in Harran (2007).

8.2.2 Normalization and Translation

Esarhaddon's apology comprises the opening section of his longest inscription, Nineveh A. I provide only the apology (and opening titulary) here. This edition follows BM 121005, the only extant complete prism with this inscription, except where indicated in the footnotes. The prism was not collated; I follow the copy of Thompson (1931, pls. 1–13) with consultation of the score provided in RINAP 4. For a full edition of the text, with a catalogue of exemplars and extensive bibliography, see RINAP 4, 9–26 Esarhaddon 1. The earlier standard edition, Borger 1956, 36–64 §27 Nineveh A, has stood well the test of time and also remains useful.

- i 1 *ēkal*^{md} *aššur-aḥ* *u-iddina šarru rabū šarru dannu*
i 2 *šar kiššati šar*^{kur} *aššur*^{ki} *šakkanak bābili*^{ki}
i 3 *šar šumeri u agade*^{ki} *šar kibrāt erbetti*
i 4 *rē'u*²⁴ *kēnu migir ilāni rabūti*
i 5 *ša ultu š eḥērišu*^d *aššur*^d *šamaš*^d *bēl u*^d *nabū*
i 6 *dištar ša*^{uru} *ninūa*^d *ištar ša*^{uru} *arba-ili*
i 7 *ana šarrūti*^{kur} *aššur*^{ki} *ibbū zikiršu*
i 8 *ša aḥ ḥ ēya rabūti aḥ ušunu*^ḥ *ḥiru anāku*
i 9 *ina qibit*^d *aššur*^d *šamaš*^d *bēl u*^d *nabū*
i 10 *dištar ša*^{uru} *ninūa*^d *ištar ša*^{uru} *arba-ili abu bānūya*
i 11 *ina puḥ ur aḥḥ ēya rēšēya kēniš ullima*
i 12 *umma annū māru ridūtiya*²⁵
i 13 *dšamaš u*^d *dadad ina biri išālma annu kēnu*
i 14 *ipulūšuma umma šū tēnūka*
i 15 *zikiršunu kabtu itta'idma niše*^{kur} *aššur*^{ki} *š eḥer rabi*
i 16 *aḥ ḥ ēya zēr bīt abiya ištēniš upaḥ ḥ ir*

24. The noun *rē'u* “shepherd” is spelled a variety of ways in the Esarhaddon corpus, and there seems to be little rhyme or reason to them. Here, the rendering *re-e'-um* does not appear to be a logogram, nor even a frozen spelling, but neither does it appear to be fully syllabic. By the Neo-Assyrian period mimation is long since past. Moreover, other spellings of this word, such as *re-é-um* (Kalḥ u A line 3; see RINAP 4, 154 Esarhaddon 77) with both apparent mimation and a syllabic É, suggest that this word often appears in a syllabic/logographic hybrid. Thus I do not render the final /m/ here.

25. *ma-a-ru* is problematic here, as one expects *mār* in status constructus. The final *-ru* appears on all three exemplars that preserve this section of the text (BM 121005, A 16962+, and BM 127875+; these are exemplars 1, 5, and 9 in the catalogue in RINAP 4, 1 Esarhaddon 1), so it is not likely a scribal error. Most translations of this text read something like, “Is this the son of my succession?” I opt for “Is this son my successor?” (so also Hurowitz 2009, 131). Admittedly, this only replaces a grammatical problem (the lack of status constructus) with a lexical problem (“succession” is amply attested as the definition of *ridūti*; “successor” is not), but I think it makes better sense of the text overall.

- i 17 *maḥ ar^aaššur^a sîn^a šamaš^a nabû^a marduk ilān^{kur} aššur^{ki}*
i 18 *ilāni āšibûte šamê u erš etî⁶ aššu naš ār ridûtiya*
i 19 *zikiršun kabtu ušazkiršunûti*
i 20 *ina arḥ e šalmê²⁷ ūme šēmê kī qibītišunu š irti*
i 21 *ina bīt ridûti ašri šugluddi ša šikin šarrûti*
i 22 *ina libbišu bašû ḥ adiš ērumma*
i 23 *riddu kēnu eli aḥ ḥ ēya ittabikmā*

26. See p. 313 n. 36 below for my treatment of KI-*tim*.

27. The copy in Thompson (1931, pl. 1) has *šal-lim*, which seems to be erroneous; see Borger's commentary on this line (1956, 40). The editors of RINAP 4, who collated the text, read *šal-me* without comment. Several of Esarhaddon's other inscriptions contain a parallel phrase, always with *šal-me* (for example, see RINAP 4, 45 Esarhaddon 5 i 13', 59 Esarhaddon 12 line 15, 109 Esarhaddon 48 line 98, 198 Esarhaddon 104 iii 41, 230 Esarhaddon 113 line 26).

28. This line, which reads *ri-id-du ke-nu* UGU ŠEŠ.MEŠ-*ya it-ta-bik-ma* in all preserved exemplars, has generated innumerable scholarly inquiries. I will forgo a complete history of investigation into this phrase, but Frahm has recently provided an exhaustive account (2009, 30–34). In recent scholarship, four possibilities appear:

1) "Proper conduct was poured out from my brothers" (see Borger 1956, 41; cf. also Hurowitz 2009, 131–32). This option assumes the decently attested meaning "proper conduct" for *riddu* (CAD R: 324–25 sub *riḍu* A) and the great apologetic term *kēnu* "legitimate, true." This option suffers from two problems. First, *kēnu* is typically spelled *plene* in the Esarhaddon corpus with an extra /e/, *ke-e-nu*, cf. i 13. This is not insurmountable, however; the adverb *ke-niš* also appears in i 11. A more difficult problem is the verb *ittabikma* (N stem of *tabāku* "pour"), which suggests that the subject poured out on to, not away from, the brothers. This problem is compounded by Nineveh A v 29, which reads *ḥ attu u puluḥ tu elišun ittabikma* "terror and fear overwhelmed them," using *ittabik* in exactly this manner.

2) "[Im]proper conduct overwhelmed my brothers" (see CAD R: 324 sub *riḍu* A 1.b). This option is exactly like option 1, except that it emends the text to *riddu* <<lā>> *kēnu*, so that it means precisely the opposite. This solves the problem of the peculiar translation of *ittabikma*. Unfortunately, there is no textual support for this emendation.

3) "Legitimate succession was imposed upon my brothers" (cf. Talon 1994, 343). This option interprets *riddu* as a byform of *riḍu* "succession" (from the root *rd'* that appears in this text in i 12, 18, 21 as *riḍûti*). This suffers from another peculiar translation of *ittabikma*, however, as well as an unexpected gemination of the /d/ in *riddu* when this root consistently appears in Esarhaddon's inscriptions with only one /d/.

4) "Persecution (and) jealousy overwhelmed my brothers" (cf. Frahm 2009, followed by RINAP 4, 12 Esarhaddon 1). This option was first suggested by Frahm in 2009. Using a parallel in the vassal treaties of Esarhaddon, Frahm (2009, 34–42) proposes that *ki-nu* should be read *qī-nu* and is a form of the word *qī'u/qin'u* "jealousy" (*Eifersucht*) (see CAD Q: 285). He then (2009, 42–45) suggests that *riddu* took on the meaning "persecution" (*Verfolgungsdrang*) from a conflation of the original meaning "good conduct" with the root *rd'* meaning "drive, persecute." As with option two, this then provides a negative subject that

- i 24 *ša ilāni umašširūma ana epšētišunu šurruḥ āti*
i 25 *ittaklūma ikappudū lemuttu*
i 26 *lišāni lemutti karṣ i tašgerti kī lā libbi ilāni*
i 27 *eliya ušabšūma surrāti lā šalmāti*
i 28 *arkiya iddanabbubū zērāti*
i 29 *pašru²⁹ libbi abiya ša lā ilāni uzenmū ištiya*
i 30 *šaplānu libbašu rēmu rašišuma³⁰*
i 31 *ana epēš šarrūtiya šitkunā ināšu*
i 32 *itti libbiya ātammuma uštābila kabattī*
i 33 *umma epšētišunu šurruḥ āma ana tēmē ramānišunu*
i 34 *taklūma ša lā ilāni minā³¹ ippušū*

makes good sense of *ittabikma*. This option makes the best grammatical sense, but struggles from forcing a poorly attested interpretation on two words whose surface meaning seems clear. Additionally, one would expect a spelling such as *qī-nu-ú* to represent the final *aleph* of the root (the West Semitic root *qn'* is well attested).

None of these options is significantly superior to the others. I translate with option 1 because it makes the best sense of the text without resorting to emendation or poorly attested parallels. Additionally, the Babylon Stele of Nabonidus (see iv 39' in §9.2.2) features the term *riddu* in a similar situation. Nabonidus accuses his predecessor of “not grasping *riddu*,” which is grounds for Nabonidus’s usurpation. The appearance of the same term in these two apologies suggests that the idea of royal legitimacy was to some extent based on *riddu*.

29. This seems to be a rarely attested adjectival form of the well-known root *pšr*, which literally means “loose.” Although this grammatical use is uncommon, the meaning seems clear. Oppenheim established several decades ago that $\sqrt{pšr} + libbu$ means “to be (again) on good terms with somebody” (1961, 265); for references see CAD P: 239 sub *pašāru* 3b, 259 sub *pašru* 3.

30. The expression *libbašu rēmu rašišuma* presents grammatical difficulties. Although *rēmu* + *rašū* is a well-known expression meaning “have (lit. ‘acquire’) compassion,” the final third-person singular suffix *-šu* on the stative verb is difficult to explain. CAD (R: 261 sub *rēmu* 2.a.2') translates “his heart prompted him to mercy,” taking *libbašu* as the subject and Sennacherib as the indirect object of the verb, but this conflicts with the stative quality of the verb and the meaning of *rašū*. Talon interprets “*rašī-šu*” as a stative which “doit marquer une qualité intrinsèque ou une constatation d’ordre plus profond que le prédicat nonverbal simplement atemporel”; he translates, “son couer était plein de compassion envers cela” (1994, 344). This translates the text literally, but it is difficult to figure out who the antecedent of “cela” is. Nissinen apparently emends the suffix to a first person, translating “he ... commiserated with me” (2003, 138 §97). This is tempting, but there is no textual support for the emendation. Both Borger (1956, 42) and Leichty (RINAP 4, 12 Esarhaddon 1) effectively ignore the suffix, perhaps considering it resumptive (they translate “empfand sein Herz Mitleid” and “he was compassionate” respectively). Without a satisfactory explanation, but unwilling to emend the text, I follow the latter course.

31. Thompson’s copy reads *lum-na-a* “evil” (1931, pl. 1), but the collations of Borger (1956,

- i 35 ^daššur šar ilāni rēmēnū ^dmarduk ša nullāti ikkibšun³²
i 36 ina ikribi utnenni labān appi
i 37 uš allišunūtima imgurū qibēti
i 38 kī ṭ ēm ilāni rabūti bēlēya lapān epšēt lemutti
i 39 ašar niš irti ušēšibūnimma sulūšunu tābu
i 40 eliya itruš ūma iṣṣ urū'inni ana šarrūti
i 41 arkānu aḥ ḥ ūya immāḥūma mimma ša eli ilāni
i 42 u amēlūti lā ṭ ābu ēpušūma ikpuḍū lemuttu
i 43 isseḥ ūma³³ ^{giš}kakkē ina qereb ninūa^{ki} balu ilāni
i 44 ana epēš šarrūti itti aḥ āmiš ittakkipū lalā'iš
i 45 ^daššur ^dšīn ^dšamaš ^dbēl ^dnabū ^dištar ša ninūa^{ki} ^dištar ša ^{uru}arba-ili
i 46 epšēt ^{la}ḥ ammāē ša kī lā libbi ilāni innepšū
i 47 lemniš ittaṭ lūma idašun ul izzizū
i 48 emūqašun lillūta ušālikūma

42) and the editors of RINAP 4 (12 Esarhaddon 1) agree on the reading *mi-na-a*. If it were *lumnā*, the translation “they do evil” would make sense, though the final long *-a* would be difficult to explain (see Talon 1994, 344).

32. Marduk’s appearance here, apparently on equal footing with Aššur, is intriguing, especially in light of the potential Babylonian involvement in Esarhaddon’s accession. See my remarks below in §8.3.

33. There are three possibilities for the word written *is-se/i-ḥ u-ma*: Talon proposes reading the verb as a form of (or error for) *nasāḥ u* “remove,” which works well with *kakku* but is not correct grammatically since *nasāḥ u* is a u-class verb (1994, 345–46). Leichty (RINAP 4, 12 Esarhaddon 1) translates “girt,” suggesting the G perfect or Gt preterite form of *ezēḥ u* “gird,” which sometimes appears with /s/ as the middle radical (CAD E: 426 sub *ezēḥ u*). This word is rare, but does appear in a Middle Assyrian literary text with the object ^{giš}kakkē. The main problem with this interpretation is that the expected form for either the G perfect or Gt preterite would be *itesḥ ū*, not *issihū*. Alternatively, Borger takes the verb as an N-stem form of *seḥ ū* “become rebellious” (1956, 42; also CAD S: 209 sub *seḥū* 4.b; and RINAP online, against the interpretation in the print volume). This interpretation is supported by the appearance of this term in the Sennacherib corpus (see RINAP 3/1, 181 Sennacherib 22 v 17), but suffers from the fact that this verb is always attested intransitively, and thus leaves the following ^{giš}kakkē without a clear subject (Borger translates “rebellierten mit(?) den Waffen”). I hesitantly follow this latter interpretation, while recognizing that none of the proposed solutions are without problems.

Hurowitz sees in the phrase *isseḥ ūmakakkē ina qereb ninūa* an allusion to Sennacherib’s murder (2009, 132–33), the omission of which from the apology is striking. He notes that *isseḥ ūma* calls to mind the “treaty of rebellion” (*adē ša siḥ u*) mentioned in the letter to Esarhaddon that many scholars argue proves the king’s innocence (Parpola 1980; I discuss this below). Such an allusion would be subtle, though, and raises the question of why Esarhaddon would want to allude to the regicide when the rest of the apology seems to take pains to evade the topic.

- i 49 *šaplānū'a ušakmesūšunūti*
i 50 *niše^{kur} aššur^{ki} ša adē māmit ilāni rabūti*
i 51 *ana naš ār šarrūtiya ina mē u šamni itmū*
i 52 *ul illikū rēš ūssun*
i 53 *anāku^{md} aššur-aḥ u-iddina ša ina tukulti ilāni rabūti bēlēšu*
i 54 *ina qereb tāḥ āzi lā ine"ū iratsu*
i 55 *epšētišunu lemnēti urruḥ iš ašmema*
i 56 *ū'a aqbima š ubāt rubūtiya ušarrītma*
i 57 *ušaš riḥa sipittu labbiš annadirma iṣ š aṣḥkabatti*
i 58 *aššu epēš šarrūti bīt abiya arpisa rittiya³⁴*
i 59 *ana^d aššur^d sīn^d šamaš^d bēl^d nabū u^d nergal^d ištār ša ninūa^{ki} dīštār ša^{uru} arba-ili*
i 60 *qātī aššima imgurū qibītī ina annišunu kēni³⁵*
i 61 *šīr takilti ištapparūnimma alik lā kalāta*
i 62 *idāka nittallakma nināra gārēka*
i 63 *1-en ūm 2 ūmē ul uqqi pān š ābēya ul adgul*
i 64 *arkāya ul āmur piqitti sīsē š imittī^{gis} nīri*
i 65 *u unūt tāḥ āziya ul āšur š idīt gerriya ul ašpuk*
i 66 *šalgu kuš š iṣṣabāt i dannat kušš i ul ādur*
i 67 *kima urinni mupparši*
i 68 *ana sakāp zāērēya aptā idāya*
i 69 *ḥ arrān ninūd^{ki} pašqiš u urruḥ iš ardema*
i 70 *ellamū'a ina eṣ et³⁶ kurḥ alnigalbat gimir qurādišun gapsūti³⁷*
i 71 *pān gerriya š abtūma³⁸ uša"ilū^{gis} kakkēšun*
i 72 *puluḥ ti ilāni rabūti bēlēya iṣḥupšunūtima*
i 73 *tīb tāḥ āziya dannī ēmurūma ēmū maḥ ḥ ūtiš³⁹*

34. For this expression, see Nissinen 2003, 141 n. n §97.

35. As with *rē'ū* in i 4 above, I suspect *ke-nim* is something like a frozen spelling, and could more accurately be rendered *ke-ni₇* (cf. Borger 2004, 400 sign 690 NIM).

36. The signs KI-*tim* here likely represent a frozen spelling for all forms of *eṣ etu* leveled throughout scribal tradition from the common phrase AN-*e u* KI-*tim* “in heaven and earth.” Thus I normalize *eṣ etin* the status constructus. Alternatively, one could read the final sign as a genuine phonetic complement and normalize *eṣ etim* in apposition to ^{kur}ḥ *alnigalbat*.

37. Most commentators render MAḤ.MEŠ here *š irūti* “exalted” (Borger 1956, 44; Talon 1994, 348; RINAP online). I prefer *gapsūti* “elite” since this term is more associated with warriors, but the difference is minimal.

38. The stative form *š abtū* “impeded” is surprising here; one expects a preterite. Talon explains, “Cette forme verbale me paraît donner à cette phrase un caractère d’incidence et on pourrait la traduire alors entre tirets ou entre parenthèses” (1994, 349).

39. On the pointed use of *ēmū maḥ ḥ ūtiš* here and its allusion to Enuma elish, see Hurowitz

- i 74 *ḏištār bēlet qabli u tāḫ āzi rā'imāt šangūtiya*
i 75 *idāya tazizma qašatšunu tašbir*
i 76 *tāḫ āzašunu raksu tapṭ urma*
i 77 *ina puḫ uršunu iqbū umma annū šarrāni*
i 78 *ina qibitiša ṣ irti idāya ittanash arū tibū arkiya*
i 79 *kalūmiš idakkakū uš allū bēlūti*
i 80 *niše^{kur} aššur^{ki} ša adē niš ilāni rabūti ina muḫ ḫ iya izkurū*
i 81 *adi maḫ riya illikūnimma unaššiqū šēpēya*
i 82 *u šunu^{lū} ḫ ammā⁴⁰ ēpiš sīḫ i u bārti*
i 83 *ša alāk gerriya išmūma^{lū} š ābē tuklātešunu ēzibūma*
i 84 *ana māti lā idū innabtū akšudamma ina kār^{id} idiglat*
i 85 *ina qibit^d sin ḏšamaš ilāni bēl kārī*
i 86 *gimir ṣ ābēya^{id} idiglat rapaštu atappiṣ ušaš ḫ it*
i 87 *ina^{iti} addari arḫ i mitgāri ūm ḡ^{ām} ūm eššēši ša^d nabū*
ii 1 *ina qereb ninūa^{ki} āl bēlūtiya ḫ adiš ērumma*
ii 2 *ina^{giš} kussī abiya ṭ ābiš ušib*
ii 3 *izīqamma šūtu mānit^d ea*
ii 4 *šāru ša ana epēš šarrūti zāqšu ṭ āba*
ii 5 *uk kibānimma idāt dumqi ina šamāmē u qaqqari*
ii 6 *šipir mahhē našparti ilāni u^d ištār*
ii 7 *kayyān usaddirūni ušarḫ iṣūni libbu*
ii 8 *lū^š ābē bēl ḫīti ša ana epēš šarrūti^{kur} aššur^{ki}*
ii 9 *ana aḫ ḫ ēya ušakpidū lemuttu*
ii 10 *puḫ uršunu kima ištēn aḫ.īma annu kabtu ēmidsunūtima*
ii 11 *uḫ alliqa zēršun*

i 1–7) The palace of Esarhaddon, great king, strong king, king of everything, king of Assyria, governor of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad, king of the four corners, true shepherd, favorite of the great gods, who from his youth Assur, Shamash, Bēl, and Nabū, Ishtar of Nineveh, (and) Ishtar of Arbela called out his name for the kingship of Assyria—

i 8–22) Of my elder brothers, their youngest⁴¹ brother am I. At the command of Assur, Sîn, Shamash, Bēl, and Nabū, Ishtar of Nineveh, (and) Ishtar of Arbela, (my) father, my progenitor, truly elevated me in the assembly of my brothers. “Is

2009, 133–35.

40. This is the subject of the sentence, but all preserved exemplars express the word morphologically in the oblique—even one variant, A 16962+ reads [...] *-ma-’i-i* (cf. RINAP 4, 9 Esarhaddon 1).

41. The superlative “youngest” is uncertain here; “younger” may be more correct. The adjective ṣ *ḫrume* means only “small, young”; I opt for the superlative due to its juxtaposition

this son my successor?" he asked Shamash and Adad by divination, and they answered him (with) a true yes, saying, "He is your replacement." He was attentive to their important word and he assembled together the people of Assyria, small and great, (and) my brothers, the seed of my father's house. Before Assur, Šin, Shamash, Nabû, (and) Marduk, the gods of Assyria, the gods who reside in heaven and netherworld, in order to protect my succession he had them swear a solemn oath. In a favorable month, on a propitious day, according to their exalted command, into the House of Succession, a terrifying place in which the establishment of kingship occurs, I entered.

i 23–31) Proper conduct departed my brothers and they abandoned the will of the gods. In their own overweening deeds they trusted and they schemed evil. Calumny, slander, and defamation—according to what is not in the will of the gods—they spread about me. Unwholesome lies they constantly spoke behind my back, (and) hatred. The appeased heart of my father they caused to hate me, which was not the will of the gods, but in the deep recesses of his heart he was compassionate and his eyes were fixed upon me exercising kingship.

i 32–44) I thought to myself and pondered, "Their deeds are overweening, and they trust their own counsel. What might they do against the will of the gods? Assur, the king of the gods, (and) merciful Marduk, to whom maliciousness is taboo, I besought with prayer, supplication, and stroking of the nose. They agreed with my words. At the counsel of the great gods, my lords, away from the evil deed(s), they caused me to reside in a secret place and their good aegis they stretched forth over me. They protected me for kingship. Afterward, my brothers raved and whatever was not good before gods and humanity, (that) they did. They schemed evil; they rebelled (with) weapons within Nineveh, without the gods; to exercise kingship they constantly butted heads with one another like goats.

i 45–52) Assur, Šin, Shamash, Bēl, Nabû, Ishtar of Nineveh, (and) Ishtar of Arbela saw the deeds of the usurpers which were done evilly, against the will of the gods, and they did not stand at their side. Their strength they turned into weakness and they caused them to bow down beneath me. The people of Assyria, who swore with oil and water the covenant oath of the great gods to protect my kingship, did not go to their assistance.

i 53–62) I, Esarhaddon, who with the support of the great gods, his lords, in the midst of battle does not flee, I quickly heard of their evil deeds. "Woe!" I cried and the garments of my rulership I rent and I wailed a lamentation. Like a lion I became impatient and my innards boiled. In order to exercise the kingship of the house of my father I beat my hands together. To Assur, Šin, Shamash, Bēl, Nabû, and Nergal, Ishtar of Nineveh (and) Ishtar of Arbela, I lifted my hands and they agreed to my word. With their true yes they repeatedly sent me trustworthy

with the preceding "elder" (*rabûti*) brothers. With the same reasoning, Talon translates the line, "De mes frères aînés, j'étais le cadet" (1994, 341).

omens: “Go! Do not hold back! At your side we will go and we will kill your enemies.”

i 63–73) I did not wait one or two days. I did not pause for my army. I did not look for my rear guard. I did not muster a contingent of horses, the binding of the yoke or the tools of my warfare. The provisions of my campaign I did not stockpile. Snow and the coldness of the month Šabāt u (XI, January–February), the depth of winter, I did not fear. Like a flying eagle, to overthrow my enemies I spread my wings. The road to Nineveh, with severity and urgency, I took and before me, in the land of Hanigalbat, all of their elite warriors impeded my advance and they sharpened their weapons. The fear of the great gods, my lords, overwhelmed them and the arousal of my mighty warfare they feared. They became like raving women.

i 74–79) Ishtar, mistress of warfare and battle, lover of my *šangu*-priesthood, stood at my side and broke their bow(s), sundered their tight warfare, and in their assembly they said, “This is our king.” At her exalted command they were constantly seeking my side. Rising behind me, they were frolicking like lambs and beseeching my lordship.

i 80–86) The people of Assyria, who had sworn concerning me a treaty, an oath of the great gods, came before me and kissed my feet. And they, the usurpers, doer(s) of rebellion and revolt, when they heard of the coming of my campaign they abandoned their troops, their support, and to an unknown land they fled. I reached the bank of the Tigris and at the command of Sin (and) Shamash, gods, lord(s) of the bank, I caused all of my troops to jump across the wide Tigris as across a canal.

i 87–ii 7) In the month Addaru (XII, February–March), an agreeable month, on the eighth day, the *ešēšu* festival of Nabû, into the midst of Nineveh, the city of my lordship, I joyfully entered and on the throne of my father I happily sat. Then blew upon me the south wind, the breeze of Ea, the wind whose blowing is good for the exercising of kingship. In good time there came upon me favorable signs in heaven and on earth. With the message of ecstasies, the instructions of gods and goddess(es), they regularly and repeatedly caused (my) heart to trust.

ii 8–11) The troops, the sinful one(s), who to exercise the kingship of Assyria had caused my brothers to scheme evil, their assembly as one I sought out and a hefty punishment I imposed upon them—I wiped out their seed.

8.3 APOLOGETIC ANALYSIS

The apologetic tone is clear throughout. Esarhaddon stresses his legitimacy even before the apology proper starts, claiming that he was divinely called to the kingship from his youth. The dichotomy between Esarhaddon and his brothers (the unworthy rivals) is blatant throughout the text: Esarhaddon constantly seeks out the will of the gods while his brothers forsake the will of the gods, Esarhaddon is

Table 9. Esarhaddon Compared to the Brothers/Usurpers ^a

Esarhaddon	The Brothers/Usurpers
seeks out the will of the gods “according to their exalted command, into the House of Succession ... I entered” (i 20–22) “Assur, the king of the gods, (and) merciful Marduk, to whom maliciousness is taboo, I besought with prayer, supplication, and stroking of the nose” (i 35–37) “I, Esarhaddon ... with the support of the great gods, his lords” (i 53) “To Assur, Sin, Shamash, Bēl, Nabû, and Nergal, Ishtar of Nineveh, (and) Ishtar of Arbela, I lifted my hands and they agreed to my word” (i 59–60) “Ishtar, mistress of warfare and battle, lover of my <i>šangu</i>-priesthood, stood at my side” (i 74–75) “at the command of Sin (and) Shamash, gods, lord(s) of the bank, I caused all of my troops to jump across the wide Tigris as across a canal” (i 85–86) “With the message of ecstasies, the instructions of gods and goddess(es), they regularly and repeatedly caused (my) heart to trust” (ii 6–7)	forsake the will of the gods^b “they abandoned the will of the gods. In their own overweening deeds they trusted” (i 24–25) “Calumny, slander, and defamation—according to what is not in the will of the gods—they spread about me” (i 26–28) “The appeased heart of my father they caused to hate me, which was not the will of the gods” (i 29) “they trust their own counsel. What might they do against the will of the gods?” (i 33–34) “my brothers raved and whatever was not good before gods and humanity, (that) they did” (i 41–42) “they girded weapons within Nineveh, without the gods” (i 43) “the deeds of the usurpers which were done evilly, against the will of the gods” (i 46–47)
on the side of what is “true” (<i>kēn</i>-) “(my) father, my progenitor, truly elevated me in the assembly of my brothers” (i 10–11) “they answered him (with) a true yes” (i 13) “their true yes” (i 60)	on the side of what is “evil” (<i>lemn</i>-) “they schemed evil” (i 25) “They schemed evil” (i 42) “the deeds of the usurpers which were done evilly” (i 46–47) “their evil deeds” (i 55) “had caused my brothers to scheme evil” (ii 9)

a. See also the chart in Gerardi 1989, 250.

b. This was recognized also by Hurowitz (2009, 132).

Esarhaddon	The Brothers/Usurpers
courageous “I did not wait one or two days. I did not pause for my army. I did not look for my rear guard. I did not muster a contingent of horses, the binding of the yoke or the tools of my warfare. The provisions of my campaign I did not stockpile. Snow and the coldness of the month Šabāt u (XI, January–February), the depth of winter, I did not fear” (i 63–66)	cowardly “And they, the usurpers, doer(s) of rebellion and revolt, when they heard of the coming of my campaign they abandoned their troops, their support, and to an unknown land they fled” (i 82–84)
humble “I besought with prayer, supplication, and stroking of the nose” (i 36–37)	arrogant “Their deeds are overweening” (i 33)

on the side of all that is “true” (*kēn-*) while his brothers occupy themselves with “evil” (*lemn-*), etc.

The rhetoric here is not nuanced. Esarhaddon represents himself as upholding all that is right and good; his enemies are rebels, usurpers. The identification of the villains subtly changes from “brothers” (i 11, 16, 23, 41) early in the text to “usurpers” (i 46, 82) later. That said, although this stark black-and-white portrayal of hero versus villain is common to the texts under consideration in this study, the Accession departs from the others in terms of detail—scilicet, there is none.⁴² Whereas the other apologies all accuse the antagonist (the unworthy predecessor or rival) of specific malfeasance,⁴³ Esarhaddon’s accusation of his brothers is frustratingly nebulous (see de Jong 2003/4, 115). They abandoned the gods, schemed evil, desired the kingship, but never committed any concrete offense. The closest the text comes to an actual allegation concerns the brothers slandering Esarhaddon, but even this maintains a healthy distance from specificity. This equivocation appears particularly salient in light of the egregious misdeed that directly led to

42. “In this context it should be noted that both omission of details and vague language seem to be characteristic of this apology. Thus the date of Esarhaddon’s accession to the throne is not stated, nor the date of the rebellion; the first date we encounter is the 8th of Adar, when Esarhaddon joyfully enters Nineveh and assumes the throne (I, 87–II, 2). Everything prior to the accession is blurred” (Tadmor 1983, 41).

43. For example, Hattusili accuses Urhi-Tessup of attacking him without cause (as David also accuses Saul), Solomon accuses Adonijah of seeking to undermine him, etc. The apology of Nabonidus might provide an exception, but the pertinent text is too broken to know with confidence.

Esarhaddon's accession: the assassination of Sennacherib. One would think the regicide would serve as the focus of the entire apology, Exhibit A of the usurpers' perfidy and illegitimacy. Instead, it remains the great mystery of the entire episode, and without other texts to fill in the history of the period, readers of the apology would be left wondering about the fate of Sennacherib.

The ambiguity of this text also obfuscates the critical reader's enterprise of determining what precisely constituted the charges against Esarhaddon. Whereas the other apologies leave little doubt regarding the charges leveled against the protagonist, with Esarhaddon we can only speculate. Thus the list below represents possibilities more than probabilities. We will begin, however, with the question of how Esarhaddon claimed legitimacy, which constituted a major focus of the apology.

Esarhaddon's legitimization. The opening statement of the apology, "Of my elder brothers, their youngest brother am I" (i 8) leaves no doubt about the open question of Esarhaddon's legitimacy. Esarhaddon responds by invoking the great triad of legitimacy—divine election, royal prerogative, and popular approval. As shown above, a disproportionate amount of this text focuses on Esarhaddon's divine election—he was called for kingship from his youth (i 5–7), all the great Assyrian gods commanded his elevation (i 9–11), this was tested with divination (i 13–14), the gods presided over an oath (i 17–19), and then the gods protected him throughout the ordeal. Embedded into the emphasis on divine election is the motif of military success. Esarhaddon's victorious march home, during which he put his opponents to flight, confirms the gods' approbation of the new ruler. Esarhaddon cleverly interweaves the motif of royal prerogative into that of divine election, portraying Sennacherib's decision as the execution of the will of the gods (i 10–15). Divine and human leaders of Assyria agreed on the appointment of Esarhaddon, brooking no room for doubting his legitimacy. Finally, upon his entrance into Nineveh, the Assyrian people all acknowledge Esarhaddon's kingship (i 80–81). Esarhaddon covers all possible bases in defending his legitimacy.⁴⁴

The overstress on his legitimacy is enough to demonstrate the urgency of this issue, but the text also provides one other hint. In a debated section of text, Esarhaddon states, "The appeased heart of my father they caused to hate me, which was not the will of the gods, but in the deep recesses of his heart he was compassionate and his eyes were fixed upon me exercising kingship" (*pašru libbi abiya ša lā ilāni uzennū ištiya / šaplānu libbašu rēmu rāšišuma / ana epēš šarrūtiya šitkunā ināšu*, i 29–31). Esarhaddon acknowledges some sort of discord between his father and himself (see Ishida 1991, 169) and only "deep down" did Sennacherib

44. Compare Hurowitz, who writes, "In summary, the apology develops through rhetorical devices and inter-textual allusions four major themes justifying Esarhaddon's appointment and accession rather than his older brothers. They include divine support; popular support; the wickedness of his opponents; and his heroic stature as a sign of individual worthiness for the rank of king" (2009, 136).

steadfastly support his kingship. Esarhaddon's very claim that Sennacherib supported him "deep down" suggests that on the surface, in public, there may have been questions about Esarhaddon's designation as crown prince. Unfortunately, however, the mysteries swirling around the events of 681 and the lack of certitude in the translation of this phrase prevent us from drawing firm conclusions from this intriguing comment.

Esarhaddon was involved in the assassination of Sennacherib. From the early days of Assyriology until just a few decades ago, the mystery of the assassination of Sennacherib plagued scholars and generated a bevy of articles. On one side were those who ascribed the assassination to one or more of Esarhaddon's brothers, correlating the biblical and classical sources with Esarhaddon's own account.⁴⁵ On the other side were those who considered Esarhaddon himself responsible. This idea, which derives from various arguments, was first put forth by Landsberger and Bauer (1927, 65–73).⁴⁶ The two sides waged war for over five decades until Simo Parpola delivered a paper entitled "The Murderer of Sennacherib" at the 26th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale in 1979. Published a year later (= Parpola 1980) and much discussed ever since, the paper proffered new evidence in favor of Esarhaddon's innocence, declaring Esarhaddon's elder brother, Arad-Ninlil (= Urad-Mullissu) the culprit with what he declared was "reasonable certainty" (1980, 175).⁴⁷ Specifically, Parpola reinterpreted a previously published (but mostly ignored) text as being a letter to Esarhaddon referring to a "treaty of rebellion" ([a]dê ša sîḫ i) involving Urad-Mullissu and two accomplices. The letter writer describes the unfortunate fate of a(n unnamed) Babylonian loyalist who uncovered Urad-Mullissu's plot to assassinate Sennacherib; Urad-Mullissu then learned of the man's knowledge and murdered him before he could reveal the matter to the king. The majority of scholars today continue to follow Parpola's interpretation, and Esarhaddon's innocence is rarely questioned anymore.⁴⁸

45. The biblical (2 Kgs 19:37) and classical reports all give a garbled version of the name(s) of the assassin, but scholars agree that the name(s) bears no resemblance to Esarhaddon. For a proposal that one of the biblical names ("Adrammelek," אֲדַרְמֶלֶךְ) corresponds to Esarhaddon's brother Urad-Mullissu, see Parpola 1980, 174. The second perpetrator named in the Bible, Sharezer (שֶׁרָצֶר), remains enigmatic.

46. Landsberger and Bauer suggest Esarhaddon's responsibility largely on the basis of Assyrian-Babylonian politics; they assert that a pro-Babylonian group assassinated Sennacherib to expedite Esarhaddon's accession of the throne since he had promised to rebuild. Von Soden argues for Esarhaddon's complicity solely on a critical reading of the apology—the view presented below is akin to von Soden's, though I do not share his confidence: "Eine Mitschuld Assarhaddons und seiner Mutter Nakija an der Ermordung Sanheribs ist auf alle Fälle wahrscheinlich" (1954, 119).

47. See also Machinist 1984. Machinist pays special attention to Parpola's contribution to this volume and considers it a "convincing demonstration" (1984, 570).

48. An exception is Grayson, who writes, "There is much to be said for [Parpola's] theory,

I submit, however, that Esarhaddon has not yet been adequately absolved of this crime. Although Parpola's case is solid, two factors prevent me from declaring it incontrovertible. First, the letter that he cites as establishing Urad-Mullissu's guilt is extremely broken, and without the context of the introduction and conclusion of the letter, some doubts remain. Even more significantly, Urad-Mullissu's two henchmen, Nabû-šuma-iškun and Š illā, are both attested as having maintained their positions into Esarhaddon's reign (cf. Parpola 1980, 177 n. 17).⁴⁹ That their roles could have gone unnoticed and therefore they escaped punishment would be reasonable if not for the fact that the very letter Parpola published is proof of their guilt.⁵⁰

Accordingly, at the 2014 Rencontre I delivered a paper entitled "The Murderer of Sennacherib, Yet Again," in which I provided a counterargument.⁵¹ Parpola concluded his paper by asserting that in the case of Sennacherib's murder, Urad-Mullissu is "the man to whom all the evidence points" (1980, 175); I argue, on the contrary, that at least six lines of evidence suggest Esarhaddon as the culprit, which I summarize here:

- (1) Esarhaddon's relationship with Sennacherib: In his apology, Esarhaddon admits that his brothers caused a rupture in his relationship with Sennacherib (i 23–31). His purpose in bringing up the matter is to lay the blame for the rupture on his brothers' slander, but he would not have broached it at all unless it were publicly known that Sennacherib and Esarhaddon had a falling out.
- (2) Esarhaddon's banishment from Nineveh: This rupture reached the point where Esarhaddon was forced to leave Nineveh (i 38–44). Scholars assert that Sennacherib had Esarhaddon leave for his own protection,⁵² but there

but, given the broken state of the letter, it cannot be definitively proven" (*CAH* 3/2, 121). De Jong has also recently expressed his skepticism regarding Esarhaddon's noninvolvement in the death of his father (2003/4, 113–15).

49. For the textual record of Š illā, see *PNA* 3/I:1173–74 sub Š illāia 4–5. The Š illāia active in Esarhaddon's reign is not conclusively linked to the Š il[...] of the letter about the murder plot, but the identification of the two seems likely. That the Nabû-šuma-iškun of the letter is the same official of this name from Esarhaddon's reign is more questionable owing to the commonness of this name; Baker records no fewer than thirty-three individuals of this name in the Sargonid period (*PNA* 2/II:888–90 sub Nabû-šumu-iškun).

50. Parpola argues that the letter was written to Esarhaddon with the point of establishing their guilt (1980, 173), but if so, why did the writer wait at least five years to inform the king (at least one text mentioning Š illā seems to have been composed in 675; see *PNA* 3/I:1174 sub Š illāia 5)?

51. A modified version of this paper will appear as Knapp forthcoming a.

52. For example, Nissinen writes, "This secret sympathy might have been the reason why Sennacherib in Nisan (I) 681, i.e., two years after the investiture, let Esarhaddon flee from

is no evidence for this. Moreover, nowhere in the ancient Near East do we have evidence of a king removing someone from the capital for their own safety. We see precisely the opposite. There are countless examples of kings bringing potentially volatile persons into their presence so that they can have them closely monitored; likewise there are examples of persons fleeing the presence of a king because they consider their life in danger *from the king*.⁵³ Sennacherib's banishment of Esarhaddon for the latter's own safety, if such it is, is a unique phenomenon.

- a) This may be coupled with an oracle from a collection dating to Esarhaddon's first regnal year,⁵⁴ which mentions "these traitors [who] provoked you, had you banished, and surrounded you" (Parpola 1997: 23 #3.3 ii 10–12).⁵⁵ This reinforces the idea that Esarhaddon's departure from Nineveh was not simply precautionary.
- (b) It is even more startling that Sennacherib, having allegedly demoted his elder son Urad-Mullissu to make way for Esarhaddon's nomination, would then allow this disgruntled son the sort of freedom necessary to commit the assassination.
- (3) The status of Esarhaddon's brothers: An oracle to Naqī'a, Esarhaddon's mother, dating to the time of his exile in late 681 (cf. Parpola 1997: LXIX–LXX) suggests that the king's elder sons enjoyed his favor at that time: "I am the Lady of Arbela. To the king's mother: 'Because you implored me, saying, "You have placed the ones at the (king's) right and left side in your lap, but made my own offspring roam the steppe ..."' (Parpola 1997, 9 #1.8). Prior to and during Esarhaddon's time away from Nineveh, it seems that he significantly fell out of favor with Sennacherib.
- (4) The rapidity of Esarhaddon's succession: It is remarkable that in less than six weeks, Esarhaddon (a) learns of Sennacherib's death, (b) musters an army, and (c) marches home and assumes the throne in Nineveh. That Esarhaddon accomplished this during the middle of winter—in Šabāt u, the eleventh month, the equivalent of our January–February—adds to the near

Nineveh to the western provinces to a 'secret place'" (1998, 20). I contend that this sort of uncritical reading of Esarhaddon's apology has contributed to the tendency to exonerate Esarhaddon of any wrongdoing prematurely.

53. For example, with only the David narrative as an example, we see the following: David flees from King Saul because he fears Saul; Absalom flees from King David because he fears David; David places Merib-Baal under house arrest so that he stay apprised of any potential sedition; David brings Chimham the Gileadite into the palace, presumably in a hostage situation.

54. Parpola dates it to "the very last days of 681 or early 680" (1997, LXX).

55. For alternate translations of this complex phrase (*annūrig šaršarrāni annūti / ussadbibūka ussēš ūnikka / iltibūkā*, cf. CAD A/2, 143 sub *annūrig* b, 381 sub *aḥ ū7.n*; CAD D, 13 sub *dabābu* 8.e; and CAD Š/2, 124 sub *šaršarrānu*).

miraculousness of this achievement. Van Buylaere notes, “even today, roads and mountain passes in eastern Turkey [where Esarhaddon appears to have been hiding] can be closed due to too much snow. So, in Shebat (January–February), in the dead of winter, Esarhaddon’s journey back from the mountains may have been difficult—even apart from his encounter with an opposing army” (2009, 303; see also Porter 1993, 23). Still more baffling is that, according to the apology, Esarhaddon’s brothers committed the deed that was “not good before gods and humanity” in order to take the kingship. Yet when Esarhaddon marched back they preemptively fled—an odd maneuver for those who had the element of surprise on their side. Esarhaddon would certainly have stayed vigilant while in exile, but given the facts, one could go further and argue that he was poised to take over at precisely that moment.⁵⁶

- (5) Esarhaddon and Babylon: As Landsberger and Bauer, among others, point out, the Babylonian question likely played a role (see also de Jong 2003/4, 113–19). The fact that Esarhaddon completely reversed Sennacherib’s policy and immediately began rebuilding Babylon suggests that he may have had some sort of alliance there, and if so, finding compatriots in a plot against Sennacherib would not have been difficult.⁵⁷ De Jong also draws attention to the fact that a certain Bēl-ušēzib declared, while Sennacherib still reigned, that Esarhaddon had been ordained to rebuild Babylon (2003/4, 116), underscoring the idea that the Babylonians may have looked to him to change their fortunes.
- (6) The lack of mention of the regicide in the apology: Esarhaddon’s omission of the assassination from his apology begs explanation (cf. de Jong 2003/4, 115). Could it be that the vague description of his brothers’ evil and godlessness is meant to draw attention from his own heinous deed? Whatever the case, it cannot possibly be coincidence that when commissioning a document specifically aimed at vilifying his brothers, Esarhaddon neglects to mention patricide.⁵⁸

None of this is conclusive, and we will remain in a state of *aporia* without further evidence. That said, given the number of reasons modern scholars 2,800

56. It could be that Esarhaddon’s emphasis on rushing off to engage his enemies as soon as he heard the news (i 63–73) was a pointed response to suspicions of this nature.

57. Landsberger and Bauer suggest that Esarhaddon’s pro-Babylonian stance derived from his mother, a “babylonischen Aramäerin und Freund Babylons” (1927, 65). See also Machinist 1984, 570; and the caution in Frame 1992, 70.

58. Von Soden similarly remarks, “Wenn wirklich die Brüder die Mörder waren, wie wir es zwischen den Zeilen wohl lesen sollen und wie es auch biblische Überlieferung annimmt, warum verschweigt Assarhaddon dann diese Tat, wo er die Brüder sonst doch so schwer beschimpft?” (1954, 118).

years removed from the event have to suspect Esarhaddon's involvement with the assassination, should we assume that Esarhaddon's subjects naively assumed his innocence? Any involvement in the regicide would have undermined Esarhaddon's legitimacy as king, so if doubts about Esarhaddon's innocence circulated in Assyria, they would have constituted a serious blow to the stability of his reign. It is thus reasonable that Esarhaddon's apology was composed with this issue in mind.

If this is the case, Esarhaddon's response, or lack thereof, is strategic. By omitting any reference to the deed and focusing on the motif of the unworthy rivals, Esarhaddon redirects the audience's attention to his brothers' disqualifications from kingship. It could be that the apologist intended to imply that even addressing the charge of Esarhaddon's complicity in Sennacherib's assassination is preposterous; thus he focused on Esarhaddon's divine and royal election to indicate that he would have had no motive to dispatch his father. By denouncing Esarhaddon's brothers and showing his designation as crown prince, the apology attempts to clear him of any possible wrongdoing in regard to Sennacherib.

Esarhaddon was in some way unfit for kingship. This stems from Nineveh A i 26–28, where Esarhaddon writes of his brothers, “Calumny, slander, and defamation—according to what is not in the will of the gods—they spread about me. Unwholesome lies they constantly spoke behind my back, (and) hatred” (*lišāni lemutti karṣ i tašgerti ki lā libbi ilāni / eliya ušabšūma surrāti lā šalmāti / arkiya iddanabbubū zērāti*). This statement acknowledges the circulation of some vicious rumor about Esarhaddon, but attempts to undermine its authority by attributing it to his brothers' impious jealousy (i 23–24).

Here again we are frustrated by the vagueness of Esarhaddon's apology. Though the basic charge is all but certain, its specific nature remains elusive. Parpola suggests that it was connected to Esarhaddon's feeble constitution;⁵⁹ this may be correct, but there is no strong evidence that the infirmity of Esarhaddon's later life beset him as early as his accession. An alternative suggestion is that the malicious talk about Esarhaddon involved some sort of plot against Sennacherib. Of course, this remains conjectural, but two points lend it a degree of credibility. First, the apology's description of the brothers' slander is immediately followed by the acknowledgment of some estrangement between Sennacherib and Esarhaddon (i 29); this suggests a link between the slander and the falling out. If the two facts are unrelated and the slander concerns failing health or some character flaw, this would strike the reader as a *non sequitur*. Secondly, the next action in the narrative is Esarhaddon's flight to “a secret place” (i 39)—and as mentioned above, the idea that Sennacherib ordered this exile as protection for the crown prince is a scholarly inference without any textual or comparative support. It is sensible that the

59. “The ‘evil rumors, calumnies and lies’ ... put in circulation against Esarhaddon by his brothers after the former had been nominated crown prince of Assyria ... may have been malevolent references to the physical ‘debility’ of the prince” (Parpola 1983, 235).

brothers' denunciation of Esarhaddon, Esarhaddon's schism with his father, and his exile from Nineveh are all related; if so, some action against Sennacherib is the most likely candidate for the root cause.

Esarhaddon liquidated his opponents. The evidence for this is admittedly circumstantial, but it is feasible that one purpose of Esarhaddon's apology was to justify his disposing of those opposed to his kingship. Although Esarhaddon departs from the rhetoric of the other apologies, which stress the motif of the merciful victor,⁶⁰ the objective may be the same. Upon becoming king he executed several adversaries, and he may have used the revolt in Nineveh as a guise for his personal motives: "The troops, the sinful one(s), who to exercise the kingship of Assyria had caused my brothers to scheme evil, their assembly as one I sought out and a hefty punishment I imposed upon them—I wiped out their seed" (ii 8–11). This involves a great deal of reading between the lines, but it is consistent with Esarhaddon's character. He is well known as a mistrustful⁶¹ ruler who exercised constant vigilance in the search for those seeking to supplant him. He is known to have resorted to such measures as the substitute king ritual⁶² and a purge of his own officials⁶³ when he suspected some danger. It would not be surprising, therefore, if his search for transgressors, and his punishment of those declared guilty, ventured somewhat beyond the bounds of propriety and raised eyebrows around Assyria. If so, the conclusion of the apology would address this situation, establishing that although Esarhaddon's vengeance was severe, it was appropriate given the gravity of the offense.

60. The apologies of Hattusili, David, and Solomon all stress the leniency they showed to their adversaries. The most interesting parallel here is that of Solomon, since his historical circumstances closely echo those of Esarhaddon. Solomon announces that he will let Adonijah and his supporters live (1 Kgs 1:50–53), but the apologist contrives an excuse in each case (at least with Adonijah, Joab, and Shimei) for Solomon to have them legitimately executed for sufficient cause (see above, §6.3). Esarhaddon makes no attempt to show mercy; see Ishida 1991, 172–73. One might say that Esarhaddon turns the motif of the merciful victor on its head, instead opting for the concept of the vengeful (but just) victor.

61. I deliberately avoid the adjective "paranoid" here, although other scholars are willing to declare Esarhaddon so (cf. RINAP 4, 2). Paranoia is, by definition, delusional and irrational. Esarhaddon, on the other hand, likely had no shortage of enemies. Similarly, Esarhaddon's notoriety for religious fanaticism may be overblown in recent scholarship; I adhere to Frame's more cautious approach ("Esarhaddon should not necessarily be considered abnormally superstitious" [1992, 91]); see also Leichty 1995, 957.

62. For the substitute king ritual see Parpola 1983, XXII–XXXII; see also Frame 1992, 91–92.

63. "In Assyria the king put his numerous officers to the sword" is recorded in both the Babylonian chronicle extending from Nabû-nâṣ ir to Šamaš-šuma-ukīn (Grayson 1975a, 86 chronicle 1 iv 29; Glassner 2005, 202–3 chronicle 16 iv 29) and the Esarhaddon Chronicle (Grayson 1975a, 127 chronicle 14 line 27; Glassner 2005, 208–9 chronicle 18 line 30). For more on this incident see Radner 2003; Frahm 2010.

8.4 THE *SITZ IM LEBEN* OF THE ACCESSION OF ESARHADDON⁶⁴

Esarhaddon's apology is fundamental to Tadmor's thesis about the purpose of ancient Near Eastern royal apologies, which I intend to test with this study, and therefore this particular investigation of the apology's *Sitz im Leben* commands special attention. Before looking at the specifics of Tadmor's claim, however, one must examine one premise behind his methodology that has not found universal acceptance among Assyriologists. Tadmor argues that royal apologies "were composed not so much in order to reflect apologetically upon the past but rather to serve certain imminent political aims in the present or some particular design for the future" (1983, 37). Some object that this could not be the case with Esarhaddon's apology because it appears only on building inscriptions intended for use in foundation deposits. Foundation deposits were buried beneath (or within the structure of) state-sponsored edifices and therefore, it is argued, such inscriptions were intended only for the eyes of the gods and future rulers who might unearth the texts.⁶⁵ But there is good reason to question this and we see some evidence within Esarhaddon's own corpus. Porter has drawn attention to the fact that Esarhaddon's self-presentation in foundation deposits issued in Assyria differs markedly from his self-presentation in foundation deposits issued in Babylonia (1993, 94–105). In the former he employs standard Assyrian titulary, invoking the Assyrian pantheon and relating his filiation with Sennacherib. In the latter, however, he emphasizes his governorship of Babylon (never mentioned in the former), invokes Babylonian deities and omits any reference to Sennacherib, who decimated Babylon a decade earlier.⁶⁶ Meanwhile, all of Esarhaddon's inscriptions that were found

64. An expanded version of this section appears in my forthcoming article, "The *Sitz im Leben* of Esarhaddon's Apology" (Knapp forthcoming b).

65. One of the first to argue this was Oppenheim: "The great majority of royal inscriptions were not written in order to convey information to the beholder. Even those steles that proclaim the kings' victories to posterity could hardly reach the public" (1977, 147). Oppenheim says that the foundation deposits were "safe from human eyes and only to be read by the deity to which they were addressed" (1977, 147), though later he also comments that "One gains the impression that these inscriptions were written for the king himself" (1977, 149).

Future rulers are the explicit audience of building inscriptions. For example, the conclusion of Nineveh A reads, "In the future, may one of the kings, my descendants, whom the god Assur and the goddess Ishtar name to rule the land and people, renovate the dilapidated section(s) of that palace when it becomes old and dilapidated. Just as I placed an inscription written in the name of the king, (my) father, who engendered me, beside an inscription written in my name, so you (too) should be like me (and) read an inscription written in my name, anoint (it) with oil, make an offering, and place (it) beside an inscription written in your name. The god Assur and the goddess Ishtar will (then) hear your prayers" (translation following RINAP 4, 26 Esarhaddon 1 vi 65–74).

66. By way of illustration, compare these two building inscription introductions:

in Babylon and relate the destruction of the city do so with a much gentler tone, portraying Esarhaddon as a ruler sympathetic to the Babylonians' concerns.⁶⁷ Such a dichotomy makes little sense in a self-presentation directed toward future rulers or even the gods. Porter is almost certainly correct in her conclusion that "The preparation of two contrasting sets of inscriptions ... is an unusual and striking example of Esarhaddon's use of building inscriptions as tools of propaganda, vehicles for presenting differing images of the king and his activities to Babylonian and Assyrian audiences" (Porter 1993, 105).

Given that Esarhaddon's other building inscriptions appear to have been directed toward specific contemporary human audiences, it seems imprudent to exclude the possibility of such an audience for his apology, prefacing the building inscription known as Nineveh A. Furthermore, positive evidence to suspect just such an audience appears when we analyze the rhetoric of the apology itself. Although I will challenge the particulars of the "imminent political aims" that Tadmor proposes the apology to have addressed, Tadmor was correct to identify the exigence of the apology as political. It is difficult to envision what sort of rhetorical situation might have elicited the apology other than a need to bolster Esarhaddon's legitimacy.⁶⁸ But why did the issue of the king's legitimacy come to the fore at this point? We turn now to the essence of Tadmor's argument.

Tadmor sought to situate the commissioning of Esarhaddon's apology in the context of his appointment of a successor: "In summary, Esarhaddon's apology composed in the summer of 673/2 should be considered as an ideological *praepa-*

Assur A: "[Esar]haddon, great king, mighty king, king of the world, king of Assyria, appointed by the god Enlil, priest of the god Assur; son of Sennacherib, great king, mighty king, king of the world, king of Assyria, appointed by the god Enlil, priest of the god Assur; the king who has revered the utterances of the gods Assur, Shamash, Bêl, (and) Nabû and has extolled their might ever since his childhood" (translation following RINAP 4, 121 Esarhaddon 57 i 1–13).

Babylon A: "[Esarhaddon, grea]t [king], mighty [king, king of the wor]ld, king of [Assyria], governor of [Bab]ylon, king of [Su]mer and Akkad, true shepherd, favorite of the lord of lords, pious prince, beloved of the goddess Zarpanitu—the queen, the goddess of the entire universe—reverent king who from the days of his childhood was attentive to their rule and praised their valor, pious slave, humble, submissive, the one who reveres their great divinity—" (translation following RINAP 4, 194–95 Esarhaddon 104 i 1–18). Note that the only deity mentioned here is Zarpanitu, wife of Marduk, chief god of Babylon.

67. "The set of building inscriptions prepared for use in Babylon thus had an important function in laying the groundwork for reconciliation with Babylonia" (Porter 1993, 104).

68. Porter notes this also. After addressing some of the concerns of the apology, she writes that some features "suggest that this text, and probably other foundation documents as well, were intended for dual use: first, for presentation to a living audience of the king's contemporaries; and second, for burial in the walls or floors of the building whose construction the text described, so that the texts would be preserved for an audience of gods and future kings" (1993, 109).

ratio for the dramatic events of the early spring of 672 (Esarhaddon's 9th year). The procedure undertaken for his own succession to the throne, as described in the apology—became paradigmatic for his own acts. In both cases the first-born was by-passed; it was the will of the king and the gods that the younger prince—apparently better suited for the august office—should be preferred” (Tadmor 1983, 45). This idea has been accepted without question by numerous scholars since.⁶⁹ I suggest, however, that the connection between Esarhaddon's apology and Assurbanipal's promotion is not as clear as these scholars suggest, and the confidence in following Tadmor's hypothesis derives largely from a consistent misdating of Nineveh A. I will continue, therefore, by establishing a relative and absolute chronology as best we can with the evidence.

Esarhaddon stayed busy in the years surrounding 673 and several historical occurrences may have factored into the commissioning of this text. Three particular events are often cited in relationship to the apology. First, in late 674 (XII 5) the Assyrian army campaigned in Egypt for the first time and suffered defeat. The setback is noted in a brief comment in a Babylonian chronicle⁷⁰ but also can be inferred from the fact that Nineveh A, the recension of Esarhaddon's annals composed immediately following the Egyptian campaign, omits it entirely. Second, about a year later, in late 673, Esarhaddon conquered Šubria in the north.⁷¹ Afterward, Esarhaddon commissioned his “letter to a god” describing this campaign: the king of Šubria had broken his loyalty oath to Esarhaddon by refusing to extradite Assyrian fugitives; when Esarhaddon invaded in response, the king begged for mercy; Esarhaddon denied his pleas and devastated the land. This is significant because Leichty assumes that the unnamed refugees were the very brothers who murdered Sennacherib and that this campaign served as the long-awaited vengeance for his slain father (Leichty 1995, 955; cf. also RINAP 4, 2). This theory suffers from the lack of any direct connection between the brothers and the fugitives,

69. For example, Nissinen (1998, 15–16), Parpola (“The incentive for the compilation of the Nin. A inscriptions ... was certainly Esarhaddon's controversial decision to promote his younger son Assurbanipal as his successor, put into effect in early 672. The detailed account of his own miraculous rise to power served to remind any potential critics of the decision—in the first place, Assurbanipal's elder brother, Šamaš-šumu-ukin, and his supporters—of the fate of those who would try to usurp power against the will of the gods”; 1997, LXIX–LXX), Porter (1993, 106), and others; see also the introduction to Nineveh A in RINAP 4, 9.

70. Grayson 1975a, 84 chronicle 1 iv 16; Glassner 2005, 200–201 chronicle 16 iv 16.

71. The chronicle of Nabû-nāṣir to Šamaš-šuma-ukin records this as happening in the month Tēbētu (X, Grayson 1975a, 84 chronicle 1 iv 19–20; Glassner 2005, 200–201 chronicle 16 iv 19–20), but the Esarhaddon Chronicle records it on the eighteenth day of the month Addaru (XII; Grayson 1975a, 127 chronicle 14 lines 24–25; Glassner 2005, 208–9 chronicle 18 lines 27–28). Esarhaddon himself describes taking the city on the twenty-first day of the month Ulūlu (VI; RINAP 4, 82 Esarhaddon 33 ii 3), but this may not have been the final clash.

however; one suspects that if Esarhaddon indeed avenged his father in this way, he would have boasted about it in several inscriptions.⁷² Instead, after the apology the brothers disappear from history. Also, in the nearly contemporary apology, Esarhaddon claims that the brothers fled to “an unknown land” (i 84), which seems a peculiar thing to say if he were en route to Šubria to execute them.⁷³ The third potentially pertinent event occurred in early 672, when Esarhaddon designated his son Assurbanipal as crown prince. This decision, which like Esarhaddon’s own appointment involved the elevation of a younger son over the eldest, is well documented and must have aroused some backlash in Nineveh.⁷⁴

It is amidst these events that one must situate Esarhaddon’s apology. Tadmor confusingly dated the text to “the summer of 673/2” (1983, 45) without comment.⁷⁵ Parpola, meanwhile, dates Nineveh A to “late 673” (1997, LXIX). Nissinen concurs, writing, “The inscription was composed in the month of Adar (XII), 673/2” (1998, 15). He confirms this with the comment that “All manuscripts bear a date of the eponym year (673) of Atar-ili, governor of Lahiru” (1998, 15 n. 49). These dates are incorrect, however.⁷⁶ Although the best-preserved copy of Nineveh A and the apology therein was not inscribed until the twelfth month of 673, we can establish that the text was commissioned at least eight months earlier. Two exemplars of Nineveh A contain the Elamite date “month ‘Opening of the Door’” in the eponymy of Atar-ili, the year 673.⁷⁷ Reiner, using evidence from the Haft Tepe stele, has established the relationship between the Elamite and Babylonian

72. Esarhaddon’s Monument A inscription, on a stele discovered at Zincirli, includes in his titulary the intriguing epithet “avenger of (his) father, who engendered him” (*mutēr gimil abi ālidišu*, RINAP 4, 184 Esarhaddon 98 i 25). The epithet is unique among his inscriptions, however, so unfortunately it raises more questions than it answers.

73. The only geographical clue to the murderers’ whereabouts comes from the biblical note that they fled to “the land of Ararat” (2 Kgs 19:37). While Šubria and Ararat (= Urartu) are not identical, the two are in the same vicinity, north of Assyria in the Lake Van area.

74. For the nomination of Assurbanipal, see Parpola and Watanabe (1998, 28–58 #6) and the appropriate sections of the introduction.

75. Summer spans two years in neither the Julian nor the Mesopotamian calendar, and I cannot discern Tadmor’s meaning here. It could be that Tadmor used the designation “673/2” to refer to the Mesopotamian year that overlaps these two years according to the Julian calendar (i.e., Esarhaddon’s eighth regnal year which would correspond to March 673 through March 672), but elsewhere in the article he consistently uses single years.

76. Tadmor’s date could be interpreted as correct, but it is confusing at best.

77. The two exemplars are exs. 2 and 6 in the catalogue used in RINAP 4. (For the exemplars, see RINAP 4, 26 Esarhaddon 1 vi 75B and 75D. The latter exemplar is marked ex. 16 in both RINAP 4 and its precursor, Borger 1956, but later collation has shown that it is actually part of ex. 6. My thanks to Jamie Novotny for bringing this to my attention.) It is worth mentioning that both of these exemplars preserve not only the date but substantial sections of the apology as well.

months and shown that “Opening of the Door” is the equivalent to Du’ūzu (IV, June–July; for the Elamite months see Reiner 1973, 97–102). Thus while we cannot fix a date for the composition of Esarhaddon’s apology with certainty, we can establish a *terminus ante quem* in the fourth month of 673.⁷⁸ With the apology dated as precisely as possible with the data at our disposal, we see the timeline in table 10 for Esarhaddon.

Assuming the fourth month of 673 is close to the initial commissioning of the text, this places the composition of Nineveh A a few months after the Egyptian debacle, a few months prior to the Šubrian campaign, and almost a full year before the investiture ceremony of Assurbanipal. I suggest, therefore, that one should look rather to the nearly contemporary events in Egypt and Šubria than to Esarhaddon’s (atypical?) crown prince appointment in the following year when assessing the motivation for the composition of Nineveh A. What is most striking about this period is the perceived weakness of the Assyrian monarch. Since victory in battle was proof of the divine support of a king—and vice versa—the Assyrian army’s vanquishment in Egypt would have reflected poorly upon Esarhaddon. Tadmor himself recognizes that Esarhaddon’s approval rating would have been at a minimum following the defeat.⁷⁹

The Šubrian campaign that shortly followed the Egyptian campaign illustrates this. The rapidity with which Esarhaddon turned the army to Šubria after suffering defeat in Egypt suggests that Assyria desperately needed a military victory to restore its image of invincibility, as was recently argued by Eph’al (2005, 103).⁸⁰ The presence of the letter to the god lauding Assyria’s might—and placing special emphasis on the gods’ assistance in the victory (see RINAP 4, 82–83 Esarhaddon

78. For a more detailed discussion of the date of the apology, especially the evidence provided by the Elamite month name, see Knapp forthcoming b.

79. “Given this historical perspective, it would seem that the repercussions of the defeat in the spring of 673 had their effect not merely on the military-imperial level but also on the domestic scene.... A defeat of ‘Assyria’s (or Assur’s) mighty armies’—to use the ideological cliché of the period—was rendered in the traditional terms of theodicy: either the oracles must have been misinterpreted ... or the king must have committed some cultic offence to incur the divine wrath. How else could Assur’s armies, headed by the king, an eternal victor, be overcome by the distant Nubians? ... The opposition to the crown was not just a figment of Esarhaddon’s imagination” (Tadmor 1983, 42–43).

80. Eph’al explains, “Ten to twelve months had therefore passed from the defeat in Egypt to the conquest of Shubria. Within this span of time, Esarhaddon had to return from Egypt to Assyria (a journey of at least two and a half months in administrative movement), to prepare for the campaign against Shubria, to march on Shubria (a further two weeks in administrative movement), and to conquer it, an undertaking that involved at least some siege warfare—also a time-consuming procedure. This crowded schedule attests to Esarhaddon’s determination in acting against Shubria in the context of his efforts to reestablish Assyria’s political prestige, which had been mortally damaged in the first Egyptian campaign” (2005, 103).

Table 10. Chronology of Selected Events in the Career of Esarhaddon (items in bold are conjectural)

700	Sennacherib installs his eldest son (and crown prince?) Aššur-nādin-šumi as governor of Babylon ^a
694	Elamites capture Aššur-nādin-šumi; ^b Aššur-nādin-šumi disappears from historical record
689	Sennacherib razes Babylon ^c
???	Sennacherib designates Esarhaddon as crown prince ^d
682?	Esarhaddon takes refuge in “a secret place” ^e
681 X 20	Sennacherib is assassinated; fraternal struggle for the throne ensues ^f
681 XI	Esarhaddon marches to Nineveh and encounters the usurpers’ army en route in Hanigalbat ^g
681 XII 2	Esarhaddon prevails over his brothers; brothers escape to “an unknown land” ^h
681 XII 8/18/28	Esarhaddon enters Nineveh and assumes kingship of Assyria ⁱ
677	Esarhaddon nominates Sin-nādin-apli as crown prince? ^j
674 XII	Assyrian army defeated in Egypt ^k

a. Chicago Prism iii 71–74 (for this text see RINAP 3/1, 167–86 Sennacherib 22) and passim in Sennacherib’s annals; Grayson 1975a, 77 chronicle 1 ii 26–31; Glassner 2005, 196–97 chronicle 16 ii 25–30.

b. Grayson 1975a, 78 chronicle 1 ii 36–45; Glassner 2005, 196–99 chronicle 16 ii 35–44.

c. For references in Sennacherib’s inscriptions see above, p. 303 n. 5; for the chronicles see Grayson 1975a, 80–81 chronicle 1 iii 22–24; Glassner 2005, 198–99 chronicle 16 iii 22–24.

d. Nineveh A i 8–22. See also Parpola and Watanabe 1988, 18 #3. Though the name of Sennacherib’s successor does not appear in this text, it may refer to Esarhaddon (so also above, pp. 303–4 n. 7).

e. Nineveh A i 23–44.

f. Grayson 1975a, 81 chronicle 1 iii 34–37; Glassner 2005, 198–99 chronicle 16 iii 34–37.

g. Nineveh A i 45–73.

h. Nineveh A i 74–86.

i. Nineveh A i 87–ii 7; Grayson 1975a, 82 chronicle 1 iii 38; Glassner 2005, 198–201 chronicle 16 iii 38. Esarhaddon records this as happening on the eighth day of the month, but the Babylonian chronicle records it as happening on either the eighteenth or the twenty-eighth day (see the commentary to iii 38 in Grayson 1975a, 82).

j. Starr 1990, 160–61 #149. See also PNA 1/I: 161 sub Aššūr-bāni-apli I.1.f.

k. Grayson 1975a, 84 chronicle 1 iv 16–18; Glassner 2005, 200–201 chronicle 16 iv 16–18. Cf. also Grayson 1975a, 126 chronicle 14 lines 20–22; Glassner 2005, 208–9 chronicle 18 lines 23–25.

673–672 ??	Ba'alu of Tyre defects from Assyria to Egypt ^l
673 IV	The Accession of Esarhaddon first appears (<i>terminus ante quem</i>), as preface to new recension of royal annals
673 VI/X/XII	Esarhaddon sacks Šubria; ^m letter to a god composed shortly thereafter
673 XII 5/6	Esarhaddon's wife dies ⁿ
672 II 12	Esarhaddon designates Assurbanipal as crown prince ^o
671 IV	Esarhaddon conquers Egypt ^p
670	Esarhaddon murders a large number of officials ^q
669 VIII 10	Esarhaddon dies en route to Egypt ^r

l. This can be determined from reading AsBbE 7'–8' in light of earlier annals that mention Ba'alu of Tyre, especially Nineveh A v 55.

m. RINAP 4, 79–86 Esarhaddon 33; Grayson 1975a, 84–85 chronicle 1 iv 19–21; 127 chronicle 14 lines 24–25; Glassner 2005, 200–201 chronicle 16 iv 19–21; 208–9 chronicle 18 lines 27–28.

n. Grayson 1975a, 85 chronicle 1 iv 22; 127 chronicle 14 line 23; Glassner 2005, 200–201 chronicle 16 iv 222; 208–9 chronicle 18 line 26.

o. Parpola and Watanabe 1988, 28–58 #6.

p. Grayson 1975a, 85–86 chronicle 1 iv 23–28; Glassner 2005, 200–203 chronicle 16 iv 23–28.

q. Grayson 1975a, 86 chronicle 1 iv 29; 127 chronicle 14 line 27; Glassner 2005, 202–3 chronicle 16 iv 29; 208–9 chronicle 18 line 30.

r. Grayson 1975a, 86 chronicle 1 iv 30–33; 127 chronicle 14 lines 28–30; Glassner 2005, 202–3 chronicle 16 iv 30–33; 208–9 chronicle 18 lines 31–33.

33 ii 5–9)—in commemoration of this campaign reinforces this conclusion.⁸¹ Although not a literary genre with many preserved examples,⁸² in at least one clear case an Assyrian letter to the god is specifically addressed to the citizenry of a major city (Assur), confirming its propagandistic nature.⁸³ In light of this, I submit

81. For the letter to the god, see RINAP 4, 79–86 Esarhaddon 33. Eph'al notes that considering Šubria's minor standing, it would seem odd to commemorate such a victory with this type of propaganda unless there were an urgent reason to do so (2003, 101).

82. For an excellent overview of letters to the god (*Gottesbriefe*), see Pongratz-Leisten 1999, 210–65; also eadem 2013. Pongratz-Leisten includes an insightful discussion of the letters' status as a distinct literary genre with reference to whether they were emic (*eigenbegrifflich* in her terminology; 1999, 217–19) and pays special attention to Esarhaddon's letter to the god in question here (1999, 238–40).

83. See Oppenheim 1960, 143. The letter opens, "To Assur, father of the gods, great lord

that Esarhaddon's decimation of unfortunate Šubria was essentially posturing in the face of the Assyrian army's diminishing reputation. The aura of Assyrian invincibility was waning—something for which the citizenry must have held Esarhaddon responsible—so the army turned to hapless Šubria to score a victory and save face.⁸⁴

Further lending support to the idea that the commissioning of the apology was inspired by Assyria's recent defeat appears when one examines other changes in this recension of the annals. As Tadmor points out (1983, 46), in addition to the apology, a few other changes were introduced into Nineveh A that distinguish it from its immediate predecessor among the annals, Nineveh B. One other new section of text was inserted, a paean praising Esarhaddon's might in flowery language (iv 78–v 25). Tadmor describes this hymn as “a tacit propagandistic response to the military debacle at the marches of Egypt” (1983, 46).⁸⁵ In addition to this new

who dwells in Ehursaggalkurkurra, his great abode, hail, all hail! To the gods of destinies and the goddesses who dwell in Ehursagkurkurra [*sic*; the text again reads Ehursaggalkurkurra; see Mayer 1983, 68–69], their great abode, hail, all hail! Hail to the city and its people, to the palace and the dweller therein!” (translation following Foster 2005, 791; for an edition of the text see Mayer 1983). The introduction of Esarhaddon's letter, where a similar address may have appeared, is not preserved.

Note, though, Pongratz-Leisten's alternative view: after concluding that the text constitutes a “fictional dialogue,” she writes, “Die Annahme eines fiktiven Dialogs richtet sich gegen die These A.L. Oppenheims, der davon ausging, daß der Königsbericht nach dem *triumphus* in der Stadt Assur laut verlesen wurde” (1999, 273–74). She asserts that the letter to the god was not read publicly in a triumphal procession, “sondern im Gegenteil der abgeschlossene ‘Briefverkehr’ zwischen König in die Kultstadt Assur einziehen konnte” (1999, 273). More recently, she states, “Sargon's claim of publicity can be compared to Hammurabi's claim of addressing his people in the stele bearing his laws which was set up in the courtyard of the temple and, consequently, only accessible to the functionaries and cultic specialists linked with it” (2013, 299). She views the letters to the god as part of a complex interplay between the ruler and the scholarly elite in the creation of authority. This is an interesting hypothesis, and even if she is right, it does not significantly affect my point here—this would restrict the target audience of the text but not strip it of its propagandistic nature entirely. Moreover, given the rhetoric of the letters to the god, this strikes me as a situation where we should not dismiss the possibility of other channels for the dissemination of the message (see my remarks in §1.4.1).

84. I also wonder whether the emphasis on harshly punishing a rogue vassal may have had another purpose. The defeat of a suzerain often sparked widespread revolt from vassals; we have no evidence of this happening in 673, but it is feasible. If that were the case, Esarhaddon could have been sending a message to other vassals who exploited Assyria's perceived weakness to throw off their shackles.

85. This is just one of several places in the article where Tadmor recognizes Egypt's role in the commissioning of the apology, even if he subordinates it to the nomination of Assurbanipal. A close reading of “Autobiographical Apology in the Royal Assyrian Literature” suggests that Tadmor had a much more nuanced view of the motivation for

passage, Nineveh A includes one major expansion of a passage in Nineveh B, concerning the revolt of a certain Nabû-zêr-kitti-lîšir.⁸⁶ The longer version emphasizes the rebellious king's oathbreaking and its lethal consequences. Tadmor understands this as a scribe writing proleptically, influenced by the forthcoming vassal treaties.⁸⁷ I suggest, on the other hand, that this ostentatious account of the perils of rebelling against the Assyrian overlord was directed at Esarhaddon's vassals at the time of the drafting of the text. Assyria's defeat at the hands of Egypt inspired at least one vassal to revolt, an examination of which will conclude our assessment of the *Sitz im Leben* of Esarhaddon's apology.

The situation of Ba'alu of Tyre furnishes one final proof of Assyria's diminishing stature during this time. Leading up to the Egyptian campaign, Ba'alu was a loyal Assyrian vassal; indeed, his vassal treaty with Esarhaddon is one of the few preserved members of this literary genre.⁸⁸ He is still listed as a vassal in Nineveh A itself (RINAP 4, 23 Esarhaddon 1 v 55). Clearly, though, Ba'alu switched his allegiance to Egypt shortly thereafter, as evidenced by the fact that Esarhaddon narrates conquering him during the second Egyptian campaign, in 671 (RINAP 4, 135 Esarhaddon 60 AsBbE 7'–8'). The defeat of a suzerain often sparked widespread revolt from vassals, and it is possible, even likely, that other Levantine states followed Ba'alu's lead in revolting from Assyria at this time.⁸⁹

The commissioning of the apology makes perfect sense within this context. It is well established that inscriptions were often composed after setbacks to help battle the inevitable questions that would arise as to the king's fitness for office.⁹⁰ In this light, we may attribute the inclusion of the apologetic introduction to Nineveh A to attacks on Esarhaddon's legitimacy, as detailed above—attacks that must have

Esarhaddon's apology than he has received credit for in subsequent scholarship. For further assessment of this, see my excursus, "Tadmor's Hypothesis versus the *Fortschreibung* of Tadmor's Hypothesis," in Knapp forthcoming b.

86. This episode appears in Nineveh A ii 40–64; in Nineveh B ii 24–33. For Nineveh B, see RINAP 4, 27–35 Esarhaddon 2.

87. "We take it that the author of that prism wrote under the impact of the new arrangements for Esarhaddon's succession when the elaborate text of the 'vassal-treaties' (*t uppi adâ*) was prepared for the ceremonies of the early spring of 672. The brief story of the Babylonian rebel in H [Nineveh B], therefore, had been rewritten and adapted to carry a new and pertinent message: any transgressor of the loyalty oaths will similarly be punished by the great gods—a point elaborated in the lengthy maledictions of the 'vassal treaties'" (Tadmor 1983, 47).

88. For the vassal treaty, see Parpola and Watanabe 1988, 24–27 #6.

89. So Kahn 2004, 111. For a slightly more detailed discussion of the trajectory of Ba'alu of Tyre during this period, see Knapp forthcoming b; Kahn 2004, 109–12; Spalinger 1974, 298–302. My thanks to Daniel Kahn for sharing his work on this subject with me.

90. See, for example, the comments in Laato 1995, 200.

come on account of Esarhaddon's poor track record in recent months.⁹¹ The time was ripe to publish a text reminding the nation that Esarhaddon was the legitimate ruler. In sum, then, I suspect that the composition of Esarhaddon's apology was primarily a result of the military failure in Egypt, suffered shortly before. This, combined with other factors such as the king's failing health,⁹² put Esarhaddon in a vulnerable position. He responded not only with the apology, but also with the Šubrian campaign and its accompanying propaganda, which was designed to encourage the Assyrian military and provide some positive news for the country. I submit that the nomination of Assurbanipal in the following year may have been motivated by the same. Recognizing his weakness and wanting to provide for a smooth transition of power in the event of his passing, Esarhaddon publicly designated a crown prince to lend stability to a nation in flux.⁹³

91. *Pace* Porter, who suggests that Esarhaddon deliberately waited until a time when his rule was secure to commission and disseminate the apology. She writes that Esarhaddon "wished to avoid raising the dangerous question of his right to rule at the beginning of the reign, when that right had just been hotly contested, but needed to raise the question and deal with it directly as soon as his position on the throne was relatively secure" (1993, 107). Not only does it seem counterintuitive to ignore the issue of one's legitimacy when one's legitimacy is most under attack, but, as shown above, this was undoubtedly one of the most *insecure* periods of Esarhaddon's reign.

92. Many scholars suspect that Esarhaddon's health deteriorated around this same time. Radner writes, "in a society that saw illness as a divine punishment, a king who was constantly confined to the sick bay could not expect to meet with sympathy and understanding. He could, however, reasonably presume that his subjects saw his affliction at the very least as an indication that the gods lacked goodwill toward their ruler" (2003, 169).

93. It is also conceivable that Assurbanipal's appointment at this time could have been coincidental. Another often-overlooked event from these years was the death of Esarhaddon's wife, which was significant enough to be mentioned in two chronicles (Nabū-nāṣ ir to Šamaš-šuma-ukīn: Grayson 1975a, 85 chronicle 1 iv 22; Glassner 2005, 200–201 chronicle 16 iv 22; and the Esarhaddon Chronicle: Grayson 1975a, 127 chronicle 14 line 23; Glassner 2005, 208–9 chronicle 18 line 26). Many suspect that this wife was Ešarra-ḫ ammat, the mother of Assurbanipal and Šamaš-šuma-ukīn. The chronicles do not identify the wife who perished, however, nor is it definite that Ešarra-ḫ ammat was the mother of either of Esarhaddon's princely designees (cf. Novotny and Singletary 2009, 174–76). Unfortunately, many significant relationships within the Assyrian royal household remain uncertain. Nevertheless, it may be that change in Esarhaddon's house contributed more than scholars have surmised in the elevation of Assurbanipal.

CHAPTER NINE

THE RISE OF NABONIDUS

9.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF NABONIDUS'S ACCESSION

NABONIDUS RULED the Neo-Babylonian Empire from 555–539 BCE, taking over after the abrupt demise of Lā-abāši-Marduk. That he had no right to the throne by birth or marriage is beyond doubt; he is the only ruler in this study who never claimed any familial connection to the (or a) previous dynasty.¹ His origins remain shrouded in mystery and one can provide only a few details about his life prior to his usurpation: His father was one Nabû-balāṭ su-iqbi, who is known only from various attestations of Nabonidus's patronymic.² His mother was Adad-guppi, known from a pseudo-autobiography³ that is one of the more interesting texts to have survived from the Neo-Babylonian Empire (COS 1.147:477–78; *HST* 146). The inscription confirms that Adad-guppi spent at least the final decades of her life in Babylon and raised Nabonidus there. It also displays a sincere devotion on her part to the city Harran, the Eḫ ulḫul temple there, and its patron deity Sin—a

1. Neither Telipinu nor Hazael was definitively the son of a previous king, but both refer to their “father’s” throne, land, etc. Modern scholars may misinterpret these claims—“father” is perhaps better translated as “predecessor” in such instances—but familial language is still used. Meanwhile, David never claimed blood kinship to Saul, but the account of his marriage to Michal is an attempt to legitimate his succession by establishing him as son-in-law of the previous king through the idea of royal affiliation.

Despite this, Nabonidus did employ the motif of royal prerogative to the previous Babylonian dynasty; he also may have claimed descent from the Sargonid rulers of Assyria. For more on both of these points, see below. It is interesting to contrast Nabonidus's use of royal prerogative with the opposite tactic of Nabopolassar, the founder of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. The latter brought attention to the fact that he was a “servant who was anonymous among the people” (COS 2.121:307); he celebrated his humble origins. Of course, the difference in rhetoric between the two rulers may result entirely from a difference in their beginnings. Nabopolassar may indeed have arisen from a lower echelon of society while Nabonidus, though not royal, certainly came from a high-ranking family.

2. For discussion of Nabû-balāṭ su-iqbi, see Mayer 1998, 256–57.

3. By “pseudo-autobiography” I mean to imply only that the inscription was likely not dictated by Adad-guppi herself, but by another shortly after her death. The text is blatant propaganda in defense of Nabonidus's legitimacy, but there is still little reason to doubt the historicity of most of its claims. Longman provides a more precise analysis of the text's literary genre (1991, 97–103).

devotion continued by her son. We also know that Nabonidus was already quite old at the time of his accession; his mother died in his ninth year at age 102 (or 104; on the discrepancy see Beaulieu 1989, 70), and this and other factors suggest that Nabonidus was probably around seventy at the time of the coup.⁴ Lastly, we know that Nabonidus had some standing in the Babylonian court. His mother claims to have “introduced” him to Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar, and Herodotus suggests that Nabonidus served as a sort of ambassador to Anatolia.⁵ Beyond this, our knowledge of Nabonidus’s early life is entirely conjectural.⁶

The years preceding Nabonidus’s accession were marked by instability. Nebuchadnezzar reigned prosperously for over four decades, but his son Amīl-Marduk (biblical Evil-Merodach) was ousted after two years and replaced by the usurper Neriglissar. The latter ruled without apparent opposition but died after less than four years. His son Lā-abāši-Marduk ascended the throne, but a second conspiracy immediately broke out and within a few months Nabonidus was recognized throughout Babylonia as the new king.⁷

Only three sources inform our understanding of the nature of Nabonidus’s coup, and all are overtly biased. The meagerness and prejudice of the evidence notwithstanding, however, we can establish a basic outline. The Babylon Stele, treated here, gives Nabonidus’s own account of the events. According to it, Lā-abāši-Marduk was assassinated by a group of conspirators for some sort of malfeasance (the Babylon Stele is broken at this point). Nabonidus was then “elected,” by both the conspirators and Marduk, and enthroned.⁸ The second source, Berossus,

4. Mayer’s suggestion that Nabonidus was born in 609 or 608 (1998, 260) would make him slightly younger, but still in his mid-fifties.

5. This assumes that Herodotus’s “Labynetus” (1.74.3; 1.77.2; 1.188.1) refers to Nabonidus. This may not be true, at least not in every case—Strassler, for instance, thinks that the first instance of “Labynetus” refers to Nebuchadnezzar (2007, 44 n. 1.74.3b).

For a thorough and intelligent assessment of Nabonidus’s origins, including a survey of the possible references to him prior to his accession, see Beaulieu 1989, 67–86.

6. According to Wiseman, “Berossus designates Nabonidus a ‘priest of Bel’” (CAH 3/2, 244). I cannot locate this designation anywhere in the extant Berossus corpus, however, or anywhere else in classical literature.

7. The precise chronology of Nabonidus’s usurpation of Lā-abāši-Marduk’s throne, and the problems involved with reconciling the various sources, can be found in Beaulieu 1989, 86–88.

8. The Harran Steles inscription paints a similar picture to the Babylon Stele but asserts that Sin was the deity responsible for calling Nabonidus to kingship. The pertinent text reads, “I am Nabonidus, the only son, who has nobody—in whose mind kingship was not. The gods and goddesses prayed for me and Sin called me to kingship” (*anāku Nabû-na’id / mārū ēdu ša mamman la išû ša šarrûtu / ina libbiya la tabšû ilānu u ištarātu ana eli- / -ya uš allû u Sîn ana šarrûti / [i]mbanni*, i 7–11). For the text, see Gadd 1958, 57–69 Nabonidus H 2; also Schaudig 2001, 486–99 §3.1. This is Beaulieu’s Inscription 13 (1989, 32).

presents a similar picture⁹—so similar, in fact, that the “most probable explanation for the similarities is that Berossus relied on texts which were directly or indirectly influenced by Nabonidus’s propagandists” (Gallagher 1996, 123).¹⁰ Finally, the Dynastic Prophecy, dating from several centuries later and severely antagonistic to Nabonidus, contributes to the reconstruction of events.¹¹ Although the “prophecy” does not mention specifics, it refers to Nabonidus as a “usu[rping] prince,” providing further confirmation of his lack of a natural right to the throne.

In sum, it is certain that Nabonidus participated in a conspiracy that ousted the legitimate heir to the Babylonian throne, Lā-abāši-Marduk. If his propaganda is to be believed, the conspirators then unanimously elected Nabonidus as the new king. Nabonidus then visited the major temples in various cities to pacify potential opposition and obtain cultic legitimacy (see Beaulieu 1989, 87–88). Shortly afterward, he commissioned his apology. For more on the reign of Nabonidus, see Beaulieu 1989, 1995.

9.2 THE TEXT

Nabonidus’s apology appears in the middle of the Babylon Stele,¹² an eleven-column inscription proclaiming Nabonidus’s intent to rebuild the E₂ ul₂hul temple in Harran. Only one exemplar of the text survives; the inscription is mostly complete, but a few lines are missing at the top and bottom of several columns. This is the

9. Berossus’s account reads, “[Neriglissar’s] son Laborosoardokhos, still a child, succeeded to the throne and ruled for nine months. Because of his evil ways, his friends plotted against him, and he was beaten to death. (149) After Laborosoardokhos had been killed, the plotters came to an agreement that a certain Nabonnedos from Babylon should rule. He was one of the plotters” (translation following Verbrugge and Wickersham 2001, 60 F10a; *apud* Josephus, *Against Apion* 1.148–49).

10. *Pace* Beaulieu (1989, 89–90), who writes, “one might suggest that this statement [Babylon Stele vii 38’–56’] was a mere piece of propaganda, but since it is corroborated by Berossus’s report and it was repeated again more than thirteen years later in inscription 13, at a time when the king certainly did not need to justify his rule anymore, one would tend to believe that it reflects some historical truth.” I agree that Nabonidus’s account reflects some historical truth, but not for the reasons Beaulieu provides. Instead, I argue for its historicity (beneath the heavy propagandistic overlay) because Nabonidus essentially admits to a conspiracy. He did not seek to deny the questionable events surrounding his accession; he sought only to justify them.

11. See Grayson 1975b, 24–37 for an edition of this text.

12. A minority of scholars refer to this artifact as the Istanbul Stele (e.g., Gallagher 1996), which can lead to confusion. The inconsistent nomenclature for the text results from some labeling it after its find spot (Hilleh, the outskirts of Babylon) while others label it after its current location in the Istanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri. I follow the former group (Babylon Stele) solely because this designation seems to be more common.

earliest preserved inscription from his reign,¹³ and it adumbrates several items that were to become commonplace in the Nabonidus corpus, such as a preoccupation with renovating cult centers and the description of dreams had by the king. The text as a whole contains an historical retrospective on the destruction of Babylon and Marduk's wrath (cols. i–ii), the beginning of the restoration of the destroyed sanctuaries under earlier Neo-Babylonian kings (iii 1'–iv 33'), the apology proper (iv 34'–vii 56'; see below), Nabonidus's maintenance of Babylonian temples (viii–ix), Nabonidus's intention to restore the E_h ul_hul temple at Marduk's request (x), and a list of references to hepatoscopic texts (xi).

9.2.1 Outline

I	iv 34'–v 24'	Lā-abāši-Marduk's Impropriety and Nabonidus's Elevation to Kingship
II	v 25'–34'	The Sins of Amīl-Marduk and Lā-abāši-Marduk
III	vi 1'–36'	Nabonidus's Dream of Nebuchadnezzar
IV	vii 1'–37'	Nabonidus's Vision of Gula
V	vii 38'–56'	Nabonidus's Appeal to Marduk

I. The Babylonian king Neriglissar died a natural death ("After [Neriglissar's] days became full, he took the path of fate," *ištu ūm<<ū>> / imlû iṣ ba{u} / uru_h šīmti* iv 34'–36'), but his son Lā-abāši-Marduk acted inappropriately and took the throne without Marduk's consent. After a short lacuna, the text resumes with Nabonidus being brought into the palace and designated as the new king by Marduk.

II. This tantalizing section features little more than the names of Nabonidus's impious predecessors before the longest break in the inscription. It is certain that the text condemns Amīl-Marduk and Lā-abāši-Marduk—these kings are consistently miscreant in Nabonidus's inscriptions, while Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar are consistently laudable—but the nature of the condemnation is lost.

III. The text resumes with Nabonidus relating a two-part dream: in the first part he witnesses a conjunction of the Great Star and the moon; in the second part Nebuchadnezzar appears to interpret the dream for him. Just before the break Nabonidus mentions that the Great Star, the moon, and Jupiter were all raised up in the sky—an interesting datum since it anticipates his elevation of Šin (= the moon) up to and beyond the level of Marduk (= Jupiter).

IV. After another break, the seventh column describes a night vision of Nabonidus. He sees the deities Nabû and Gula and supplicates them.

V. With Nabû and Gula having mollified Marduk for him, Nabonidus humbly approaches the Enlil of the gods and requests a prosperous kingship. This sec-

13. For my dating of the Babylon Stele, see §9.4 below.

tion is mostly well preserved but still difficult to translate, with the staccato opening perhaps intended to reflect Nabonidus's speechlessness before Marduk. In any event, Marduk's reply is not preserved; it may have appeared in the opening lines of the eighth column.

9.2.2 Normalization and Translation

This inscription appears on the Babylon Stele of Nabonidus, first published by L. Messerschmidt as “Die Inschrift der Stele Nabuna'id's, Königs von Babylon,” (= Messerschmidt 1896). For a recent edition of the text and more bibliography, see Hanspeter Schaudig's *Die Inschriften Nabonids von Babylon und Kyros' des Grossen samt den in ihrem Umfeld entstandenen Tendenzschriften* (= Schaudig 2001, esp. pp. 514–29 §3.3). I include in this edition only iv 34'–vii 56', as the introduction and conclusion to the stele have little to do with Nabonidus's apology.

The primary goal of my transcription is not to represent phonetic reality—a wildly speculative enterprise with regard to Neo-Babylonian Akkadian, since case vowels are mostly interchangeable (cf. *ṣ aḫr[i]* for the nominative in iv 38'; *mītū* for the oblique in vii 13'; etc.)—but to make my interpretation of the form transparent. When forms are written syllabically I follow them without exception; where words are written logographically, except where indicated otherwise I follow stringent Old Babylonian grammar in terms of indicating case, number, etc.

- iv 34' *ištu ūm<<ū>>*¹⁴
 iv 35' *imlū iṣ ba[u]*¹⁵
 iv 36' *uruḫ ṣimti*
 iv 37' *^mlā-abāši-^dmar[duk]*¹⁶
 iv 38' *māršu ṣ aḫr[i]*
 iv 39' *lā āḫ iz riddi*
 iv 40' *kīma lā libbi ilānima*
 iv 41' *ina ^giss¹⁸kussī ṣarrūti*

14. I emend U₄-*um* to U₄-*mu*; *ūmū* is the most common way of rendering the oblique plural of this word in the Nabonidus corpus (it occurs in iv 5' and viii 21' of this text; see Schaudig 2001, 164 §IV.2.3.3.c); Schaudig categorizes it as a rare plural form without an ending (2001, 165 §IV.2.3.3.e).

15. Although the right half is broken, the UD (= *tū*) sign seems clear on the photo (Scheil 1896, pl. 1). Morphologically the verb must be subjunctive; thus the author of the inscription treated it as subordinate to *ištu*.

16. The form and meaning of the name *Lā-abāši-Marduk*, here written *^mlā-a-ba'-ṣi-^d* AMAR. UTU, are not straightforward. Most scholars suggest that it means “O Marduk, may I not be ashamed,” but this does not explain the intervening /i/ between *abāš* (first-person singular durative from *bāšu* “be ashamed”) and the theophoric element. It may simply be anaptyctic; if it were a suffix one would expect doubling of the final radical.

- iv 42' *ūšimma*
 (about three lines missing)
 v 1' *ana qereb ēkalli*
 v 2' *ublū'innima*¹⁷
 v 3' *kullatsunu ana šēpiya*¹⁸
 v 4' *[i]ššapkūnimma*
 v 5' *ušaššiḡū*¹⁹ *šēpāya*
 v 6' *iktanarrabū*
 v 7' *šarrūtī*
 v 8' *ina amāt d^dmarduk bēliya*
 v 9' *ana bēlūtī*²⁰ *māti*
 v 10' *annašima*
 v 11' *ēma uš ammaru*
 v 12' *akaššadma*
 v 13' *šaninī ul īši*
 v 14' *ša^{md} nabû-kudurrī-uš ur*
 v 15' *u^{md} nergal-šarra-uš ur*
 v 16' *šarrāni ālik maḥ riya*
 v 17' *našparšunu*
 v 18' *dannu anāku*

17. For the suffix *-ū'inni* as a Neo-Babylonian combination of the accusative first-person singular suffix and the ventive, see Schaudig 2001, 145 §IV.1.2.b.

18. There are multiple instances in this inscription where the MEŠ sign is lacking from an apparently plural logogram, thus I render GĪR-ya here as the dual *šēpiya*. A stricter rendering of the logograms would lead to *šēpiya*.

19. Since Messerschmidt's *editio princeps*, most scholars have emended *ū-ša-āš-ši-qu* here to *ū-na'-āš-ši-qu*, on the grounds that the causative of *našāqu* is a causative of action (X caused Y to kiss) and not a causative of result (X was caused to kiss); see Schaudig 2001, 517–18 n. 777. I suspect, however, that this is an overzealous effort to stick to the underlying meaning of the Š stem and prefer to interpret the word more loosely without resorting to emendation. Interestingly, after accepting the emendation “hesitantly” (“schließe ich mich zögernd der Emendation an”), Schaudig continues, “Dies halte ich allerdings nach meinem jetzigen Verständnis noch für unwahrscheinlich, da man als zweites Objekt wenigstens *niši* ‘die Leute’ erwarten dürfte und die Stelle eigentlich doch zeigen soll, wie allgemein und spontan die Begeisterung über Nabonids Erhebung zum König gewesen sei” (Schaudig 2001, 518 n. 777). This interpretation would, of course, help the apologetic analysis of this text by providing further legitimacy through popular acclamation.

20. One expects *bēlūt* for the status constructus of *bēlūtu*; the final *-i* appears to be a case of “euphonischem Hilfsvokal zur Vermeidung eines langem Vokals in geschlossener Silbe” (Schaudig 2001, 166 §IV.2.4.1.1.d; Schaudig does not comment on the form in this particular line, however).

- v 19' *ummanātišunu*
v 20' *qātū'a*²¹ *paqdā*
v 21' *ana qibītišunu*²²
v 22' *lā egākuma*
v 23' *kabattašunu*
v 24' *šuṭ ubbāk*
v 25' ^m*amīl*-^d*marduk*
v 26' *mār* ^{md}*nabû-kudurri-uš ur*
v 27' *u* ^{mlā}*-abâši*-^d*marduk*
v 28' *mār* ^{md}[*nergal*]-*šarra-uš ur*
v 29' [... A]D[?]-*šunu*
v 30' [...] *ma*
v 31' [...] *ti*
v 32' [...] *ēšunu*
v 33' *upaṭ ṭ ir*³
v 34' [*a*]*mātišunu*
(about seven lines missing)
vi 1' [...] *iš*
vi 2' [...] *nūtima*²⁴
vi 3' *usallišunūti*
vi 4' *ana ṭ eḫūti kakkabi* [*rab*]
vi 5' *u* ^d*šîn ātame ina libbiya*
vi 6' *ištēn eṭ lu ina idiya*
vi 7' *izzizma itamâ*
vi 8' *ana yâti*

21. For this normalization of the first-person singular pronominal suffix following -û, see GAG §65c.

22. The inscription reads *qī-Ē-šu-nu*. I suspect four horizontals leading into one vertical wedge is an accepted way of writing Ē in this inscription (see below, vii 23'), *pace* Schaudig who transcribes the second sign with [!]. I do, however, follow Schaudig in reading Ē phonetically as *biti* here. Ē would normally be read *bit* in this situation, but since the inscription regularly collapses /tš/ to /ts/, I read the sign *biti* to allow for an anaptyctic vowel between the noun in the status constructus and the pronominal suffix (cf. *ummanātišunu* in v 19').

23. One is tempted to reconstruct [*riksā*]*ti* “contracts” in v 31' since this word appears often with *paṭ āru* especially in the D stem (see CAD P: 298–300), but the intervening [...] *ēšunu* suggests using caution. It is also counterintuitive that the verb appears in the first- and third-person singular; if it were used in the sense of breaking a contract or oath one would expect *upaṭ ṭ irū* in reference to both Amīl-Marduk and Lā-abâši-Marduk.

24. The most likely reconstruction here is [*damq*]*iš* / [*appališ*]*šunūtima* (see Gallagher 1996, 125), but alternatives are possible.

- vi 9' *umma ṭ eḥūti mimma*
vi 10' *idāti lumni*
vi 11' *ul ibašši*²⁵
vi 12' *ina šuttimma*²⁶
vi 13' *šuāti^{md} nabû-kudurrî-uš ur*
vi 14' *šarru pâni maḥ râ*
vi 15' *u ištēn gerseqqû*
vi 16' *ina narkabti uzuzzû*²⁷
vi 17' *gerseqqû*
vi 18' *ana^{md} nabû-kudurrî-uš ur*
vi 19' *ītame umma*
vi 20' *itti^{md} nabû-na'id*
vi 21' *dububma šuttu*²⁸
vi 22' *šī ša iṭ ṭ ulu*
vi 23' *lušannika kâšu*²⁹
vi 24' *^{md} nabû-kudurrî-uš ur*
vi 25' *išmešuma*
vi 26' *ītame ittiya*
vi 27' *umma mīnâ dumqī*
vi 28' *ša taṭ ṭ ulu qibâ*

25. There is no perfect grammatical explanation for *i-da-ti lum-ni ul i-ba-áš-ši*. With the meaning “portent(s),” *idātu* appears in the plural (see CAD I–J: 307), but the verb *ibašši* is in the singular. Additionally, if one treats *lumni* as an adjective, it does not agree in either gender or number with *idāti*. Thus one expects a construct phrase, and indeed *idāti* could be in the status constructus with a euphonic half-vowel to prevent a long vowel in a closed syllable (see p. 342 n. 20 above). But *lumnu* typically appears as an adjective (as opposed to the noun *lemuttu*; see CAD L: 120–25, 127–30). I therefore treat *idātu* as a collective treated as a singular (see Schaudig 2001, 191 §IV.3.4.e), modified by the adjective *lemni*. This is an *ad hoc* explanation, and there is still a gender issue, but in any event the meaning is clear.

26. This unexpected form, written MAŠ.GI₆-*im-ma*, demonstrates the phenomenon of the emphatic *-ma* suffixed on a noun; see Schaudig 2001, 274 §V.9.1.2.a.

27. I treat *uzuzzû* here as a G stative third-person masculine plural (see GAG: 47* paradigm 35). One might expect a preterite or participle, but this form matches only the stative or infinitive, and it is clearly not the latter.

28. I treat *šuttu* (written logographically MAŠ.GI₆) as a nominative to agree with *šī*; this requires treating this phrase as an anacoluthon: “The dream that he saw, let him repeat it to you.” Alternatively one could normalize *šutta* in the accusative, but then one would expect the accusative pronoun *šīāti* (but see Schaudig 2001, 139 §IV.1.1.a).

29. The repetition of KA in the sequence *-an-ni-ka ka-a-šû* could be the result of dittography; the doubled object marker is redundant.

- vi 29' *yâši āpulšuma*³⁰
vi 30' *aqbiš umma*
vi 31' *ina šuttiya*
vi 32' *kakkabu rabû* ^{d30} u ^dmarduk
vi 33' *ina qereb šamāmē šulûtu*
vi 34' *damqiš*
vi 35' *appališšunûti*
vi 36' *ina šumiya ilsânnime*
(about five lines missing)
vii 1' [(...) ^{mul}]dilbat ^{d.udu.idim}kayyamānî
vii 2' [(...) ^{mul}]šūpî ^{mul}ŠĀM³¹
vii 3' [(...) kakkabî] rabûti āšib šamāmē
vii 4' [surq]innu rabbûti
vii 5' *aštakkanšunûtima*
vii 6' *ana balāt ūmī rūqûti*
vii 7' *kunnu* ^{giš}kussî labār palê
vii 8' *dummuqā*³² amātû'a
vii 9' *ina maḥ ar^dmarduk bēliya*
vii 10' *usallišunûti*
vii 11' *anālma ina šāt mūši*
vii 12' ^dnin<<tin>>uga bēlti
vii 13' *muballiṭ at mītū*
vii 14' *nādinat napišti ruqtu*
vii 15' *appalisma*
vii 16' *ana balāt napištiya dārâ*
vii 17' *ana suḥ ḥ uru pānišu*
vii 18' *usallišuma*
vii 19' *pānišu tusaḥ ḥ iramma*
vii 20' *ina būnišu namrûti*
vii 21' *kīniš tappalsannima*
vii 22' *urri immiramma*

30. Reading *a-pul'-šu-ma*, following Schaudig. The PUL sign is missing a Winkelhaken, but it cannot be anything else. The photograph (Scheil 1896, pl. 1), while suggesting only two Winkelhakens, does not show the sign with perfect clarity.

31. The reading ŠĀM follows Butler 1998, 233. Schaudig and others read AB×ḪAL (Schaudig 2001, 519; see discussion in n. 782). The identity of this star remains unknown.

32. Schaudig (2001, 199 §IV.4.2.1) treats *dummuqā* as an infinitive, presumably due to the string of infinitives preceding it (*balāt .kunnu, labār*). Grammatically, however, it looks like a third-person feminine plural stative, which would agree with *amātû'a*. I prefer the latter interpretation.

- vii 23' *ana enigidrukalamasumu*³³
 vii 24' *ērubma ina maḥ ar^dnabû*
 vii 25' *mušārik palêya*
 vii 26' *ḥ atṭ u išarti*
 vii 27' *ušparu kīni*
 vii 28' *murappišat māti*
 vii 29' *ušatmiḥ u qātū'a*
 vii 30' *šubat ^dtašmētu*
 vii 31' *^dgula qā'īšat balāt i*
 vii 32' *appalisma urriku*³⁴ *balāt i*
 vii 33' *ūmī rūqūtu*
 vii 34' *šumqut šaršarrūtu*³⁵
 vii 35' *ina maḥ ar^dmarduk bēli*
 vii 36' *tudammiq*
 vii 37' *amātū'a*
 vii 38' *inūšu ana ^dmarduk bēliya*
 vii 39' *palḥ iš*
 vii 40' *atta'idma*
 vii 41' *ina tēmīqi utnenni*
 vii 42' *ašte'a ašrišu*
 vii 43' *aš batma supēšu*
 vii 44' *amāt libbiya*³⁶ *aqbiš*

33. Schaudig reads *é'.nig.gidar.kalam.ma.sum.ma*, which is the typical name of this temple (see George 1993, 132–33 #878). Schaudig's reading of the final sign is a simple error, however; the photograph (Scheil 1896, pl. 2) clearly shows MU. Other copies and transliterations also have the correct MU (Messerschmidt's copy recreates the photograph closely; see also Langdon 1912, 280). Also, Schaudig's ¹ by the É sign is unnecessary, as four horizontals leading into one vertical wedge seems to be an acceptable way of writing É in this inscription (cf. v 21' above).

34. The D infinitive *urruk(u)* is expected, but the signs clearly read *ur-ri-ku*. This may be scribal error, as both the theme vowel of the infinitive and the final (case?) vowel *-u* are inexplicable.

35. I very tentatively follow Oppenheim (*ANET*, 310 n. 10, *apud* Gallagher 1996, 125), rendering LUGAL.LUGAL-*u-tú* as *šaršarrūtu* “rebel.” There are problems with this interpretation, most significantly the lack of corroborating evidence, but also the strangeness of having a concrete noun such as “rebel, opponent” formed with the abstract ending *-ūtu*.

36. It is difficult to tell which nouns go with which verbs here, and the inscription seems short one verb. The most confusing word is *aš batma* which could either go with the previous word *ašrišu*, which makes the most grammatical but the least contextual sense, or be an auxiliary verb with *supēšu* (so Schaudig, who treats the latter as an infinitive, “Ich began, zu ihm zu beten und”), or be the subject of *supēšu* if the latter is a noun. If the latter

- vii 45' *umma lū anākuma*
 vii 46' *šarru mi[g]ir libbika*
 vii 47' *ša šarrūtu ina libbiya*
 vii 48' *lā [ba]šū yâtî³⁷*
 vii 49' *lā mūdâka³⁸*
 vii 50' *ša attâ bēl bēlî*
 vii 51' *tum[al]lū qâtûa*
 vii 52' *eli šarrâni ša tambûma*
 vii 53' *ištu ullû ipušu*
 vii 54' *bēlûtu šûriku³⁹ ûmîya*
 vii 55' *libbirâ šanātiya*
 vii 56' *lūpušma zâninûtu*

iv 34'–42') After [Neriglissar's] days became full, he took the path of fate. Lā-abāši-Mar[duk], his young son, who did not grasp proper conduct, sat upon the throne of kingship against the will of the gods, and [...]

v 1'–13') [...] into the palace they brought me, and they all prostrated themselves at my feet. They kissed my feet, constantly blessing my kingship. At the word

is the case, the third-person pronominal suffix is problematic. Whatever grammatical sense one makes of this, it is clear that Nabonidus is beseeching Marduk with prayers. See *CAD* Š : 32 sub *š abātu*

37. vii 48'–49' are some of the most difficult lines in the entire text. Schaudig's ¹*tab*¹ for the missing sign in vii 48' does not seem likely; the photograph (Scheil 1896, pl. 2) shows that the stele, while not perfectly preserved here, has a clear vertical wedge at the right edge of the sign. Though he does not comment on it, I suspect that Schaudig's reading here is influenced by the Harran Steles inscription, which reads, "(thought) of the kingship did not enter my mind" (*ša šarrūtu / ina libbiya lā tabšû*, i 8–9). Langdon's *ba-* is closer (followed by Beaulieu 1989, 89), but the two long horizontals do not have the same open angle as other BA signs on the stele. The traces seem to me closest to PA; Messerschmidt's DU is also feasible. I read *[ba]šû* in an attempt to combine a sensible reading with something defensible from the traces, but I restore this with hesitation.

38. The word *mūdâka* clearly comes from *mūdû*, an adjective meaning "wise, knowing." I read the suffix *-ka* as a second-person masculine singular pronominal suffix, thus rendering "I, who do not know you." Others treat the entire form as a first-person singular stative verb, which is unexpected on an adjective (even though the adjective itself comes from a participial form); cf. *ANET*, 310. The latter reading is supported by the Verse Account, which also contains *mūdâka* (v 9') in a context where the second-person masculine singular pronominal suffix makes little sense. But there it is preceded by *enqêk* "I am wise," another adjective/stative hybrid whose form is not entirely certain, so I hesitate to read too much into that attestation.

39. This is a strange form. We expect a precative in light of the following two verbs, but it is morphologically more similar to a stative or imperative.

of Marduk, my lord, I was raised to lordship for the country. Whatever I strive for I will achieve, and I will have no equal.

v 14'–24') Of Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar, kings who came before me, their legitimate⁴⁰ representative am I. Their armies are appointed to me, at their command I am not negligent, and I am the one who makes their mood pleasant.

v 25'–34') Amīl-Marduk, son of Nebuchadnezzar, and Lā-abāši-Marduk, son of [Nerigl]issar [...] their [...] and [...] ... their [...] I/he dissolved. Their [w]ords [...]

vi 1'–36') [...] ... I prayed to them. At the conjunction of the [Great] Star and the moon, I pondered to myself. A man stood at my side and he said to me, “There is no evil omen in the conjunction.” In that same dream Nebuchadnezzar, the former king, and an attendant were standing in a chariot. The attendant said to Nebuchadnezzar, “Speak with Nabonidus and the dream that he saw—let him repeat it to you.” Nebuchadnezzar heeded him and he spoke with me, saying, “Tell me whatever good things that you saw.” I answered him, and I said to him, “In my dream, the Great Star, the moon, and Jupiter were raised up in the sky—joyfully I looked upon them. They called me by name, and [...]

vii 1'–37') [...] Venus, Saturn, [...] Arcturus, the Šam-star, the great [star(s)] who dwell in the sky, I permanently fixed [shake of]ferings of greatness for them, and for life through far-off days, firmness of throne, a long-lasting reign, (and) that my words might be acceptable before Marduk, my lord, I prayed to them. I lay down (to sleep) and during the night Nintinuga, the lady who revives the dead, the giver of life, I beheld, and for the lasting life of my being, (and) that she turn her face (to me), I prayed to her. And she did turn her face to me, and with her shining visage she beheld me. Day grew light and I entered Enigidrukalamasumu before Nabû, the lengthener of my reign, who caused my hands to grasp the scepter of justice, the staff of trueness which broadens (my) land. The dwelling of Tašmētu—Gula, the granter of life—I beheld, and (for) the lengthening of (my) life (to) far-off days (and) the destruction of opposition, before Marduk, the lord, she made my words pleasant.

vii 38'–56') At that time, to Marduk, my lord, I was reverently attentive, and with entreaty and supplication I besought him (at) his sanctuary. I appealed with invocations and the words of my heart I spoke to him, saying, “If I am a king (who is) a fav[o]rite of your heart, (though) the kingship never [enter]ed my mind—me, one who does not know you—that you, lord of all lords, filled my hands above the kings whom you called, (who) from of old executed lordship, (then) lengthen my days, let my years grow long, and let me execute the role of provisioner.”

40. For this translation of *dannu* see CAD D: 94–95 sub *dannu* 2.

9.3 APOLOGETIC ANALYSIS

The Rise of Nabonidus poses some interesting challenges to the interpreter. Its recognition of Marduk as the granter of Nabonidus's kingship appears inconsistent with the king's other (presumably later) inscriptions that elevate Sin as the chief god, and it is often difficult to establish with confidence what charges Nabonidus is responding to. In a vacuum, this text would not stand out as an apology. But unlike most of the other rulers, the accusations against whom must be determined predominantly on the basis of internal analysis of their apologies, in Nabonidus's case some hostile texts that castigate him for sundry misdeeds have been preserved. Chief among these are the Dynastic Prophecy (COS 1.150:481–82), the Cyrus Cylinder (COS 2.124:314–16; *HST* 157), and the Verse Account (Kuhrt 2007, 75–80; *ANET*, 312–15).⁴¹ With the benefit of these perspectives we can fix with relative certainty two main charges leveled against Nabonidus, which in turn enables us to grasp the rhetoric he uses to defend himself. Before turning to the accusations, we will examine his royal legitimation, which provides a paradigmatic illustration of the rhetoric used for such purposes in the ancient Near East.

Nabonidus's legitimation. Having no natural right to the throne, Nabonidus appeals to all three motifs of the great triad of legitimacy. His claim of divine approval is concise: “At the word of Marduk, my lord, I was raised to lordship for the country” (v 8'–10'). His claim of popular acclamation is equally straightforward. The beginning of the pertinent passage is broken, but the preserved text demonstrates beyond doubt that Nabonidus here asserts that his would-be subjects demanded his elevation to kingship: “[...] into the palace they brought me, and they all prostrated themselves at my feet. They kissed my feet, constantly blessing my kingship” (v 1'–7'). The claim of royal prerogative is the most intriguing. One might expect Nabonidus to forgo this rhetorical ploy for establishing legitimacy since he had no kinship with the former kings, and indeed was a significant member of the cabal that killed Neriglissar's heir and perhaps Nebuchadnezzar's also.⁴²

41. Because texts hostile to Nabonidus allow us to establish accusations against him, which in turn illuminate the exigence of his apology, I include it in this study. This is in contrast to Cyrus, who seems to have been well received and, if he had many enemies, their accounts do not survive. Thus, although the Cyrus Cylinder is a fine specimen of ancient Near Eastern royal apologetic, I exclude it from this study. The Rise of Nabonidus allows us insight into both his legitimation and the way he justified himself against certain charges; the Cyrus Cylinder offers only the former.

42. Wiseman (*CAH* 3/2, 241–43) suggests that the same group may have installed both Neriglissar and Nabonidus. If this is the case (and it remains speculative), one is tempted to theorize that the conspirators intentionally installed an elderly ruler. We have no solid evidence for Neriglissar's age, but the fact that he died a natural death after only a few years would favor his taking the office at an advanced age (the statement in the Babylon Stele that Lā-abāši-Marduk was Neriglissar's “young son” [iv 38']) should not be taken at face value.

On the contrary, Nabonidus utilizes this motif in two ways. First, he associates himself with well-respected earlier kings and dissociates himself from previous ousted rulers, a strategy seen as early as the historical prelude in the Proclamation of Telipinu. Nabonidus claims, “Of Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar, kings who came before me, their legitimate representative am I” (*ša Nabû-kudurri-uš ur/ u Nergal-šarra-uš ur/ šarrāni ālik maḥ riya/ našpašunu / dannu anāku*, v 14'–18').⁴³ Shortly thereafter he brings up his less worthy antecedents Amil-Marduk and Lā-abāši-Marduk, but his condemnation of them is lost in a lacuna (though one condemnation of the latter is preserved elsewhere; see the following charge).⁴⁴ By affiliating himself with the illustrious former kings of Babylonia, Nabonidus begins to project himself as the appropriate continuation of the dynasty despite his lack of kinship with either Nebuchadnezzar's or Neriglissar's families. Nabonidus's second means of using the royal prerogative motif is equally interesting, though unfortunately a crucial section is lost in a lacuna. The entirety of column vi (and perhaps the opening lines of column vii) of the Babylon Stele are dedicated to demonstrating Nebuchadnezzar's support of the new regime. Nabonidus relays a dream in which he spoke with Nebuchadnezzar and informed the famous king of the divine backing of the new dynasty. The text then breaks, but we can presume that Nebuchadnezzar added his blessing to those of the gods and the citizens.⁴⁵ Thus Nabonidus, like many other usurpers, manages to claim legitimacy from the divine, royal, and public arenas in his royal legitimation.

Nabonidus usurped the throne from Lā-abāši-Marduk. It seems obvious that Nabonidus's detractors would have focused on his usurpation of the throne. The Dynastic Prophecy, which includes a brief passage hostile to Nabonidus, confirms this by designating him a “usu[rping] prince” (*rubû ḥ a[mmāu]*, ii 11'; see Gray-

since contemporary evidence indicates he managed his own estate while a prince; see *CAH* 3/2, 243). Nabonidus was certainly an old man. This practice could have paralleled situations in which the college of cardinals, in an effort to avoid rapid change, intentionally selects an elderly new pope. If this parallel is accurate, the installation of Nabonidus backfired, as he survived another seventeen years at least and instituted major reform—not unlike Leo XIII, who was installed as pope at almost seventy and served for a quarter century.

43. The word *dannu* is traditionally translated “strong, mighty” in royal titularies (see Nineveh A i 1 in §8.2.2) but “legitimate” may be a more appropriate translation, as it certainly is here (*CAD* D: 94–95 sub *dannu* 2).

44. Gallagher (1996, 122, 125) and others assume a condemnation of lawlessness and contract breaking, and they are likely correct; see above, §9.2.2 p. 343 n. 23.

45. The final preserved portion of the Adad-guppi Stele likely contributes to the predecessors' blessing of Nabonidus's rule as well. The inscription reads, “Nabonidus, my son, the offspring of my womb, I caused to stand before Nebuchadnezzar son of Nabopolassar and Neriglissar, king(s) of Babylon. Day and night he guarded their lordship and whatever was good for them he continually did” (ii 45–48).

son 1975b, 32–33).⁴⁶ Nabonidus responds to this with a transformative rhetorical strategy, admitting to the coup but justifying it. He accomplishes this by recourse to two motifs in the rhetoric of legitimate usurpation, the unworthy predecessor and passivity.

With the first of these motifs, Nabonidus creates a rigid dichotomy between his righteous actions and the illicit deeds of Lā-abāši-Marduk. In addition to the typical self-laudatory assertions,⁴⁷ Nabonidus castigates his immediate predecessor as one “who did not grasp proper conduct” (*lā āḫ iz riddi* iv 39’)⁴⁸ and who “sat upon the throne of kingship against the will of the gods” (*kīma lā libbi ilāni / ina kussī šarrūti / ūšimma*, iv 40’–42’). These two demonstrations of Lā-abāši-Marduk’s unworthiness combine to show that “he failed from both secular and sacral perspectives” (Dick 2004, 8). In addition to the generic correspondence to allegations against the unworthy predecessor by the likes of Hattusili and Solomon, these phrases echo the very language used by Esarhaddon. Esarhaddon’s brothers abandoned proper conduct, *riddu* (i 23), and also acted against the will of the gods (*kī lā libbi ilāni*, i 26, 46, and similarly in several other passages, see the references on table 9 above in §8.3). This similarity does not suggest any direct dependence between the two texts, but it does suggest a rhetoric of condemnation shared by the two kings.⁴⁹

The second motif that Nabonidus employs to legitimate his coup is equally clear; he aggressively proclaims his passivity.⁵⁰ He states that his supporters “brought me” (*ublu’innima*, v 2’) into the palace and paid him homage, with Nabonidus always the object of the verb.⁵¹ Indeed, in his description of the coup, he is

46. Neither the Cyrus Cylinder nor the Verse Account, perhaps the two most viciously anti-Nabonidus texts, preserves the portions where one might expect to see reference to his coup, so unfortunately their perspectives are lost.

47. “Whatever I strive for I will achieve, and my kingship will have no equal” (v 11’–13’), “at their command I am not negligent” (v 21’–22’), “I am the one who makes their mood pleasant” (v 23’–24’), etc.

48. As Dick has already noted, this expression does not refer to youthful naiveté but to “willful failure to acquiesce to the conduct expected by both gods and humans. Thus we have here the equivalent of Berossus’s judgment of Lā-abāši-Marduk in the *Babyloniaca* of κακοῦθεια, which is always conscious, intentional malice” (Dick 2004, 8). This further points to the conclusion that Berossus’s account was influenced by Nabonidus’s propaganda.

49. It should be noted here that *riddu* is not a very common word in Akkadian; see CAD R: 324–25 sub *rīdu* A.

50. Dick includes an equivalent to my description of the motif of passivity in his discussion of the succession apologies of Nabonidus and David: as he puts it, the fact that “they had not sought out or connived for rule” was a trademark of the “rhetoric of ‘legitimate’ usurpation” (2004, 12).

51. This accords with Berossus’s statement that “the plotters came to an agreement that a certain Nabonnedos from Babylon should rule.” One should not read too much into

only the subject of one verb, and that verb is passive (“I was raised [by Marduk]”; the verb here is *annašima*, the N stem of *našû*, v 10’). Nabonidus portrays himself throughout the episode as merely the vehicle through which the will of the gods and people comes to fruition; he acquiesces to their demands without assuming any active role. Nabonidus’s vehement asseverations of his noninvolvement in the coup invite the skeptical reader to question the extent of his role in the coup; one might even read against the grain to speculate that his enemies accused him of an excess of ambition.

Nabonidus expresses this idea more overtly later in the text. In his supplication to Marduk, he claims that “the kingship never [enter]ed my mind” (*ša šarrûtu ina libbiya / lā [ba]šû*, vii 47’–48’).⁵² While one might accept this claim at face value, Nabonidus’s reiteration of the point seems a bit too emphatic. The man doth protest too much, methinks. In any event, it is difficult to evaluate whether the usurpation of the throne had any legitimate grounds based only on Nabonidus’s rhetoric, and we must leave the matter unresolved to turn to the more famous allegation against the final Neo-Babylonian king.

Nabonidus was a heretic. Nabonidus’s religious reform has intrigued scholars since the early twentieth century, when inscriptions from his reign honoring Sin above the other gods began to surface. The reform centered on an elevation of the moon god Sin⁵³ to the position of “king of the gods” and a corresponding deemphasis of Marduk, the head of the Babylonian pantheon. It is beyond the scope of this study to provide a complete survey of the evidence, but a few preliminary comments must be made.⁵⁴ First, Nabonidus’s reform sparked a great

this corroboration, however, as Berossus’s version of events likely stems from Nabonidus’s propagandists (see Gallagher 1996, 122–23; see also §9.1 above).

52. Though the reading of one of the key words (*bašû* “entered”; lit. “was”) is uncertain here (see my discussion in §9.2.2 347 n. 37), the identical phrase appears in the Harran Steles inscription (i 8–9). The latter inscription was composed in the fourteenth or fifteenth year of Nabonidus’s reign (Beaulieu 1989, 32), which leads Beaulieu to accept the genuineness of Nabonidus’s assertion of noninvolvement—“since ... it was repeated again more than thirteen years later ... at a time when the king certainly did not need to justify his rule anymore, one would tend to believe that it reflects some historical truth” (1989, 90). I suspect Nabonidus’s legitimacy was an ongoing issue throughout his reign, however, perhaps even a more urgent issue in the final years when he actively pushed an unpopular religious reform on Babylonia. The Harran Steles inscription could have borrowed this apologetic phrase from the earlier Babylon Stele because it was just as pertinent at the time of later inscription.

53. Following the Verse Account, some scholars point out that Nabonidus likely did not worship Sin *per se*, but a different, “westernized” manifestation of the moon god, specifically Ilteri or Saḫ ar. I think the difference is not as obvious as some purport, but in any case it is not relevant for this study. For a discussion of this issue, cf. J. Lewy 1946, 425–33.

54. Some recent discussions of this issue can be found in Schaudig 2002, 628–38 and Beaulieu 1989, 43–65 (see also Beaulieu 2007, esp. pp. 148–63, for a discussion of Nabonidus’s theology). For the origins of the Sin movement see J. Lewy 1946. For a diachronic

deal of animosity among the scribal elite (Beaulieu 2007, 162–63) and the Marduk priesthood. The opposition won out when Cyrus defeated Nabonidus and undid his reforms, ushering in an era of vitriolic anti-Nabonidus sentiment. Two texts in particular, the Verse Account and the Cyrus Cylinder, excoriate Nabonidus for his perceived heresy. These texts provide what is lacking for most of the other rulers in this study, namely, explicit evidence of the charges filed against him. The Cyrus Cylinder labels Nabonidus a “lowly” (*maṭ ūš*⁵⁵) person for whom “it was in his mind to fi[ni]sh off the worship of Marduk, the king of the gods; h[e c]ontinually did evil to his city” (*palāḫ a^dMarduk šar ilāni i[gm]ur karšuššu / lemutti ālišu [it]eneppuš*, lines 7–8).⁵⁶ The Verse Account, likely composed shortly after Nabonidus’s reign (see von Soden 1983, 66–68), portrays Nabonidus as neglectful of his people (i 1’–20’) and arrogant (v 8’–22’). All of these accusations stem from Nabonidus’s heresy; both the Cyrus Cylinder and the Verse Account treat Nabonidus’s innumerable failings as symptoms of the disease of improper cult (see Lee 1994). The promotion of Šin at Marduk’s expense led to the vilification of Nabonidus.

A second germane point about Nabonidus’s religious reform concerns its origin. Early scholars depicted Nabonidus as an innovator, but Julius Lewy showed in his influential 1946 study that Nabonidus actually revived an earlier religious trend instigated by the Assyrian Sargonid rulers, the earliest origin of which perhaps dated back over a millennium before.⁵⁷ This becomes more intriguing in light of the idea put forth by several scholars that Nabonidus was a direct descendant of

perspective, see Tadmor 1965, though his arrangement of Nabonidus’s inscriptions was improved by Beaulieu (1989, 1–65).

55. The precise meaning of this word is unclear; the root *mṭ*’ has the basic meaning of “small, diminutive” (see CAD M/1: 428–35). Thus we see, for example, Schaudig’s translation “ein Geringer” (2001, 554). Others interpret the word in some way to mean feeble-minded (see Cogan’s translation “incompetent” in COS 2.124:315), but this may be an anachronistic retrojection of later traditions of Nabonidus’s madness into the Cyrus Cylinder (see Beaulieu 2007, 137–40).

56. The interpretation of the first part of this phrase is unclear; for a completely different interpretation see CAD K: 224 sub *karšu* 2. My translation closely follows Cogan’s (COS 2.124:315), with only one substantive difference from Schaudig (“Marduk, den könig der Götter, zu ehren, br[ach]te er in seinem Inneren zu Ende”; 2001, 554).

57. Schaudig writes, “Die Erhöhung des in Syrien seit der altbabylonischen Zeit prominenten Mondgottes ist keine Erfindung Nabonids, der hier aus ‘privater Frömmigkeit’ seinen Hausgott verherrlicht habe, sondern die Fortsetzung des Aufstiegs Šins, der sich unter den Sargoniden anschickte, in synkretischer Verschmelzung Assur, den ‘assyrischen Enlil’ abzulösen. Nach dem Sturz des Gottes Assur durch den Untergang Assyriens geriet nun Marduk, der babylonische ‘Enlil der Götter’ ins Visier der ambitionierten Priester Šins” (2002, 628). This fact is now widely accepted among Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian scholars, but for whatever reason has not seemed to disseminate beyond the subfields. For Assyrian temple building in Harran, see Novotny 2003a.

the Sargonid rulers.⁵⁸ Although we lack conclusive evidence, this idea is feasible, and the very fact that one might speculate about Nabonidus's Assyrian forebears suggests that he may have been accused of being an outsider by his contemporary opponents.⁵⁹ Nabonidus did little to dispel such rumors when he referred to the previous builders of the Eḫ ulḫul temple—presumably Assurbanipal and other Assyrian rulers—as “my ancestral kings” (*šarrāni abbē'a*, ii 7 of the Eḫ ulḫul Cylinder according to the primary exemplar, BM 91109; see Schaudig 2001, 419). This would undoubtedly have contributed to the resistance his reform encountered, particularly in the Babylonian heartland.

Before examining Nabonidus's response to these charges, one question looms as we interpret the Babylon Stele: Were these issues alive at the beginning of his reign? The actual steps to renovate Sîn's temple in Harran were not executed until Nabonidus's thirteenth year (Tadmor 1965, 357–58), over a decade after the apology was commissioned. Is it reasonable to assume that he faced the charge of heresy immediately after his accession? I submit that it is, and there are several grounds for thinking this. First, as the Babylon Stele itself shows, Nabonidus announced his intention to rebuild Harran within months of his accession—column x even mentions the Eḫ ulḫul temple by name. Second, in Nabonidus's second regnal year he dedicated his daughter as *entu* priestess of Sîn (for the date of this event see Beaulieu 1989, 23). Third, the Harran Steles inscription relates that Nabonidus's ten-year sojourn in Arabia, which began in his third regnal year, stemmed from opposition by the priests and citizens of Babylon, Borsippa, Nippur, Ur, Uruk, and Larsa, who “did not know the fury of the king of the gods, Nannar [= Sîn]” (*la idû ezzessu ša šar ilāni Nannari*, i 18 in exemplar A, Gadd 1958, 56; the complete pertinent section is i 14–27). All of these items demonstrate convincingly that Nabonidus introduced his pro-Sîn agenda at the outset of his rule. It follows, then, that the accusations of heresy would have arisen equally early.

One might then question, if Nabonidus began sponsoring Sîn above all other deities upon his accession, how and why did he “apologize” for his alleged heresy? To answer this question a diachronic view of Nabonidus's inscriptions is helpful, for Beaulieu has shown that Nabonidus's tone changes from conciliatory in the earliest inscriptions to antagonistic in those dating to the end of his reign (1989,

58. This idea was published as early as Langdon (1912, 57) and modified by J. Lewy, who argued that Nabonidus was a great-great-grandson of Esarhaddon (1946, 418 n. 74). Mayer recently advocated a modification of this view, arguing that Nabonidus was Esarhaddon's great-grandson and Assurbanipal's grandnephew from his mother's side, and also Nabopolassar's nephew and Nebuchadnezzar's cousin from his father's side (1998, 257). See Schaudig's remarks on this idea: “Da bisher eindeutige Belege für seinen [Mayer's] Vorschlag fehlen, möchte ich mich ihm vorerst nicht anschließen” (2001, 12).

59. The situation with David's Philistine connections is not entirely dissimilar (see above, §5.3).

43–65).⁶⁰ All of the late inscriptions refer to Sin with the epithet “king of the gods” (*šar ilāni*)—surely an inflammatory statement—but the early inscriptions praise Sin in a more subdued manner (Beaulieu 1989, 44–45, table 3). The Babylon Stele, for example, lauds Sin as “lord of the diadem” (*bēl aḡi*, x 25') while reserving the title “king of the gods” (*šar ilāni*, i 30', ix 5', x 30') for Marduk. Although Nabonidus continues to be remembered primarily for his iconoclasm, he attempted to avoid conflict in the nascent stages of his reform.

The apology of the Babylon Stele shows his efforts to pacify the Marduk priesthood. The most pertinent section merits inclusion in full:

At that time, to Marduk, my lord, I was reverently attentive, and with entreaty and supplication I besought him (at) his sanctuary. I appealed with invocations and the words of my heart I spoke to him, saying, “If I am a king (who is) a fav[o]rite of your heart, (though) the kingship never [enter]ed my mind—me, one who does not know you—that you, lord of all lords, filled my hands above the kings whom you called, (who) from of old executed lordship, (then) lengthen my days, let my years grow long, and let me execute the role of provisioner.” (vii 38'–56')

Nabonidus asserts that after becoming king he acknowledged Marduk's sovereignty and supplicated him. He does not combat the accusation that he is ignorant of Marduk's proper cult; he accepts it but stresses his humility and piety before the preeminent Babylonian deity. Nabonidus employs clever rhetoric here—he uses the accusation of his ignorance of Marduk to demonstrate the latter's generosity and gracious favor upon him. Marduk elevated Nabonidus to the kingship even though he was “one who does not know you [Marduk]” (*lā mūdāka*, vii 49').⁶¹ This action of Marduk shows Nabonidus to be the “fav[o]rite of your [Marduk's] heart” (*mi[g]ir libbika*, vii 46'; this is a typical epithet of Babylonian kings, but it is used pointedly here). Nabonidus turns around the arguments of the Marduk priesthood, showing that Marduk's unwarranted magnanimity toward Nabonidus gives this Babylonian ruler more reason than any other to honor him. True, Nabonidus does not have a history of worshipping Marduk, but the two are on good terms.

Nabonidus displays equal savvy in dealing with the overarching accusation of heresy. He attributes the command to renovate Sin's temple to Marduk, thus

60. Beaulieu concludes, “Thus, Nabonidus was already a convinced devotee of Sin in the beginning of his reign. He may already have contemplated a major religious reform, but felt his rule still too uncertain to accomplish it... While in Teima Nabonidus's convictions may have strengthened, but we have no source to judge. The tone of the late inscriptions simply shows that upon his return, now strongly confident in his power, he felt the time ripe to accomplish a long-planned reform” (1989, 65).

61. See above §9.2.2, p. 347 n. 38. I interpret the final *-ka* as a second-person masculine singular suffix referring to Marduk, not as a stative first-person singular suffix.

transforming this deed from heterodox whimsy into pious obedience to Marduk's will: "Marduk, my lord, trusted in me and the constant renewal of the divine rites he placed in my hands; the propitiation of the angry gods (and) the settlement of their seats he ordered with his pure command, for my reign" (*Marduk bēli yāti / uqa'ānnima / uteddušu mēsi ili / ušaškin qātūa / sullumu ilāni zenūtu / šurmā šubātsun / ina pišu ellu itame / ana palēa*, x 4'–11'). Concerning the restoration of other deities to Harran as well, Nabonidus states shortly thereafter, "Marduk, king of the gods, also spoke their (re)gathering" (*Mardukma šar ilāni / iqtabi palḥ aršun* x 30'–31'). The earliest preserved proclamation of the empire's renewed focus on Harran, which paved the way for the elevation of Sîn to king of the gods, is saturated with language of Marduk's will. Nabonidus overtly paid respect to long-standing traditions of Babylonia, but his true intent manifested itself from the onset of his reign.

His willingness to acknowledge Marduk notwithstanding, the propaganda campaign does not appear to have been effective. While it is difficult to evaluate his approval rating while in office, after Nabonidus's exile to Kerman (following Berossus's account) his opposition launched an extensive smear campaign, eventually giving rise to the tradition of the insane king of Babylon.⁶² Some generous portrayals of Nabonidus have surfaced from the ancient world, particularly those of Berossus and the intriguing Prayer of Nabonidus in the Dead Sea Scrolls (4Q242). On the whole, however, the legacy of the final Neo-Babylonian king was one of destructive unconventionality.

9.4 THE *SITZ IM LEBEN* OF THE RISE OF NABONIDUS

The commissioning of Nabonidus's apology can be situated historically with more certainty than most other texts in this study and its original purpose follows intuitively from an examination of the Babylon Stele's date and provenance. In Beaulieu's chronology of Nabonidus's inscriptions, he concludes that "inscription 1 must have been written towards the middle of Nabonidus's first regnal year" (1989, 22). Schaudig, however, dates the text to Nabonidus's thirteenth year (2001, 515), so some remarks on this issue are necessary. The historical portions of the inscription without exception describe events of the beginning of Nabonidus's reign: the dedication of prisoners from Hume (ix 31'–41') who were taken in Nabonidus's first year; the tour of great Babylonian shrines (ix 48'–54'), done shortly after his accession in an attempt to garner support and attested in contemporary letters; and the celebration of the *akitu* festival (ix 41'–47').⁶³ At the risk of putting

62. Contrary to popular opinion, this tradition was not contemporary to Nabonidus (Beaulieu 2007). Even his most hostile detractors during Cyrus's reign never hinted at dementia as the cause of his aberrant behavior.

63. I contend that the *akitu* festival of column ix of the Babylon Stele is that of Nabonidus's

forth a circular argument, Nabonidus's honoring of Marduk in the Babylon Stele also seems more congruent with the more conservative flavor of his pre-Arabia inscriptions than with his more polemical later inscriptions, as discussed in the apologetic analysis above. Schaudig argues in favor of year thirteen for the Babylon Stele because he thinks the inscription is connected with the actual renovation of the E $\dot{h}$ ul $\dot{h}$ ul temple, which did not occur until the latter part of Nabonidus's reign. The inscription only announces the intent to renovate the E $\dot{h}$ ul $\dot{h}$ ul temple, however; it does not describe the execution of this task. Overall, the contents of the inscription seem more indicative of Nabonidus's first regnal year.

The stele's provenance is equally significant. It was uncovered in Hilleh, on the outskirts of ancient Babylon (Scheil 1896, 15). The construction of such a monument in Babylon should not surprise. Although Nabonidus focused a great deal of resources in the west, he did not ignore the cult centers of Babylonia's heartland, especially in the beginning of his reign. But the location of this inscription cannot be coincidence. The publication of the apology was specifically meant for the population of Babylon, particularly the Marduk priesthood.

Nabonidus's critics were headquartered in the capital, and it was there that the Rise of Nabonidus was disseminated. Accusations of various sorts were aired immediately after Nabonidus's accession, and his apology served as a public defense. The coup was vindicated on the grounds of public and divine will, and confirmed by the oneiric message of Nebuchadnezzar, the respected previous dynast. Most importantly, Nabonidus responded to the charges of religious heterodoxy by claiming that his entire religious reform, however deviant it seemed, was the sacred duty entrusted to him by Marduk.

first regnal year, but this is not beyond a reasonable doubt. We know that the festival was canceled during Nabonidus's residence in Arabia, but it was apparently resumed upon his return to the capital. Unfortunately, the Nabonidus Chronicle, which pays special attention to the celebration of the *akitu* festival, is not preserved from regnal year eleven to regnal year seventeen, precisely the period of the reign pertinent to this issue (see Grayson 1975a, 104–11 chronicle 7; Glassner 2005, 232–39 chronicle 26). Even after the resumption of the festival, it would seem odd for Nabonidus to call attention to it in a proclamation of his piety, since his abandonment of the festival was part of the cultic neglect of which he was accused (see Lee 1994, 34–35).

CHAPTER TEN

SUMMARY

I EMBARKED ON this study with two primary objectives. First, I aimed to investigate the nature of apologetic with insights from the discipline of genre theory and to reevaluate how understanding this phenomenon can help us better understand ancient Near Eastern texts. Second, I attempted to employ this understanding of apologetic in the interpretation of several exemplary texts. On the whole, then, I present both a theory about the phenomenon of ancient Near Eastern royal apologetic and a (nonexhaustive) comparative anthology of royal apologies that applies this theory. Although such an anthology is, by its nature, difficult to summarize, here I wish to briefly recapitulate the formal discussion of apologetic and to offer some selected specific conclusions drawn from the preceding chapters.

10.1 THE NATURE OF APOLOGETIC

Apologetic is a rhetorical phenomenon and thus I employ rhetorical scholarship to establish a definition of apologetic usable in ancient Near Eastern studies. I conclude that apologetic is propaganda produced as defense against specific attacks upon a person's character or conduct. Since apologetic is defensive by definition, a primary criterion by which apologetic is identified is the historical situation that occasioned the discourse, namely, attacks that demand a response. This study focuses on royal apologies, in which kings defend their actions during irregular successions and, in some cases, when dealing with opponents to maintain their grip on the throne. Most royal apologies involve both a legitimizing aspect, in which the apologist defends the ruler's fundamental right to the throne, and a justificatory aspect, in which the apologist defends the new ruler against accusations of specific misconduct. This expands on the definitions given to apology in the classic studies of Hoffner (1975, 49) and Tadmor (1983, 36), both of which focus on the justificatory aspects of apology and do not precisely conform to the understanding of apology in classical and rhetorical studies.

I detail the reasons behind my definition so that it might serve as a corrective to various misunderstandings of apologetic that have prevailed in ancient Near Eastern studies during the last several decades. The most significant of these is the conceptualization of apologetic as a literary genre, a category of text defined by certain structural and formal features. Because literary genres are culturally situated institutions, understanding apologetic this way necessitates placing ev-

ery example of ancient Near Eastern royal apology within a shared cultural tradition—that is, any apology must have been composed by an author with knowledge of earlier members of the genre. On the contrary, the diagnostic situational feature of defense against accusation is not culturally bound, but common to all human society. By acknowledging the transhistorical nature of apologetic one can recognize the rhetorical similarity of these texts without having to postulate dubious historical relationships among them.

Refining our understanding of royal apologetic in the ancient Near East should curb some of the work in which scholars have extrapolated about the circumstances and contents of some royal apologies by analyzing other, more easily interpretable members of the putative genre. One major purpose of the comparative anthology in this study, therefore, is the results of the apologetic analysis of individual texts, which I cannot summarize here. But reading apologies in concert remains a beneficial enterprise, as I will show in the following section.

10.2 VIEWING THE ROYAL APOLOGIES TOGETHER

I devote the bulk of the study, chapters 3–9, to analyzing seven royal apologies, spanning the Hittite, Israelite, Aramean, Assyrian, and Babylonian civilizations. One advantage of such a study is that it allows one to compare certain features of the apologies. I will finish the study with three examples of how a synthetic view of the texts yields further insight into the phenomenon of royal apologetic in the ancient Near East.

10.2.1 *Motifs Used in Ancient Near Eastern Royal Apologies*

As discussed in §2.1, several motifs occur frequently in royal apologies and justifications. In the seven texts examined in this study we see the motifs as indicated in table 11. This table illustrates the idea that no individual element is diagnostic of a royal apology. Because apologetic is not a literary genre (see §1.5), no rules govern what formal and thematic features must be included. Each apologist shaped his composition according to the historical circumstances surrounding the king's rise to power and the accusations of malfeasance that followed him to the throne. Even divine election, the strongest foundation on which to legitimate one who acceded to the throne irregularly, is absent from two of the seven apologies investigated.

10.2.2 *The Rhetoric of Response*

Since focusing on apologetic necessitates focusing on rhetoric, it may be useful to provide a brief synopsis of the rhetorical strategies used by the kings to respond to accusations. In the table below I categorize the response to each charge examined in chapters 3–9 as either transformative or reformatory (see §2.3); I also include

Table 11. Motifs Used in Ancient Near Eastern Royal Apologies

	DE	RP/A	PA	MS	UP	UR	Pass.	TNR	MV	YB? ^a
Telipinu		? ^b		? ^c	✓				✓	
Hattusili	✓	✓ ^d	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
David	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		? ^e
Solomon		? ^f	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓
Hazael	✓	? ^g		✓						
Esarhaddon	✓	✓	✓			✓				✓
Nabonidus	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			

DE = Divine election

RP/A = Royal prerogative/
affiliation

PA = Popular acclamation

MS = Military success

UP = The unworthy
predecessor

UR = The unworthy rival(s)

Pass. = Passivity

MV = The merciful victor

TNR = Transcendent non-
retaliation

YB = The younger brother

- a. In this table I do not restrict the motif to the youngest brother. Instead I include any brother who draws attention to the fact that he is not the eldest.
- b. Telipinu makes a passing mention of both royal heritage and his marriage into the royal family, but he does not emphasize them; see §3.3.
- c. Telipinu refers to a campaign just after assuming the throne (§25), but the paragraph is fragmentary and it is difficult to establish the rhetorical function of the reference.
- d. Hattusili emphasizes the fact that he is the son and brother of former rulers, though he does not ground his legitimation on royal affiliation. Divine election supersedes all else in the Autobiography.
- e. The oldest extant traditions about David, including the fragments of the Davidic apology, do not include this motif, although it appears in later traditions.
- f. David’s imprimatur of Solomon’s claim to succession appears in the textus receptus, but it is difficult to remove entirely from later accretions; see §6.2.2.
- g. In the preserved text it is difficult to understand the rhetorical function of the references to “my father” in this inscription; see §7.3.

the category of omission for charges which we may infer were leveled against the ruler but are not responded to directly in the apology. Many of these could be interpreted multiple ways. For example, one could argue that Nabonidus’ response to the charge of heresy was transformative because he admitted to unfamiliarity with Marduk or that it was reformative because he portrayed himself as pious to Marduk after his call. In such subjective cases I use my best judgment.¹

1. One could also make the case that nearly every response is reformative because of the explicit wording of the charge. For example, Telipinu certainly denied that he seized the

Table 12. Rhetorical Strategies Used in Ancient Near Eastern Royal Apologies

Ruler	Charge	Type of Response: T = Transformative R = Reformative O = Omission
Telipinu	<i>Telipinu seized the throne without provocation.</i>	T
	<i>Telipinu collaborated in the deaths of Huzziya and his brothers.</i>	R
Hattusili	<i>Hattusili usurped the throne from the rightful king, Urhi-Tessup.</i>	T
	<i>Hattusili mistreated the household of Arma-Tarhunta.</i>	T
David	<i>David was an outlaw and a bandit.</i>	T
	<i>David murdered Nabal and plundered his estate.</i>	R
	<i>David stole Ahinoam, wife of Saul?</i>	~O ^a
	<i>David was a Philistine mercenary.</i>	T/R
	<i>David was involved in the deaths of Saul and his sons.</i>	R
	<i>David was responsible for the death of Abner.</i>	R
	<i>David was responsible for the death of Ish-Baal.</i>	R
	<i>David arrested Merib-Baal.</i>	T
	<i>David gave away Merib-Baal's estate.</i>	R
	<i>David was involved in the death of Amnon?</i>	R
	<i>David was responsible for the death of Absalom.</i>	R
	<i>David was responsible for the death of Amasa.</i>	R
	<i>David exterminated the house of Saul.</i>	T

a. Evaluation of this charge, which may be a fabrication of modern scholars who are at the mercy of limited sources as much as an historical reality, is complicated. See the appropriate section of §5.3 for details.

throne *without provocation*, which is reformative. But the substance of this charge revolves around Telipinu's seizure of the throne, which he did not (and could not) deny. Thus he explained why his coup was just, which is fundamentally transformative.

Solomon	<i>Solomon usurped power from Adonijah.</i>	T
	<i>Solomon ordered the murder of Adonijah.</i>	T
	<i>Solomon ordered the murder of Joab.</i>	T
	<i>Solomon held the descendants of Barzillai hostage.</i>	T
	<i>Solomon ordered the murder of Shimei.</i>	T
Hazeal	<i>Hazeal was not the legitimate successor.</i>	T
	<i>Hazeal murdered his predecessor.</i>	O
	<i>Hazeal invaded Samarian territory without cause.</i>	T
Esarhaddon	<i>Esarhaddon was involved in the assassination of Sennacherib.</i>	O
	<i>Esarhaddon was in some way unfit for kingship.</i>	O
	<i>Esarhaddon liquidated his opponents.</i>	T
Nabonidus	<i>Nabonidus usurped the throne from Lā-abāši-Marduk.</i>	T
	<i>Nabonidus was a heretic.</i>	R

Any conclusions we might draw from looking at the responses in the aggregate must be tempered by the acknowledgment that each royal apology is crafted according to the unique circumstances of the ruler being defended. We must also bear in mind that the only charges we can examine are those implicit in the text itself or, in a few cases, those we can reconstruct from other contemporary texts. The table above doubtless includes errors and omissions of its own. Nevertheless, a few things stand out. As one might expect, every charge of usurpation is combatted with transformative rhetoric. One cannot deny that one has taken power while sitting on the throne; therefore one must justify one's claim. It is doubtless this necessity that spawned what Dick refers to as the "rhetoric of legitimate usurpation" (2004, 12) involving such motifs as the unworthy predecessor and passivity (see §2.1). This commonality of exigence explains why these motifs appear repeatedly in disparate cultural contexts (and, in turn, why some scholars erroneously conclude from the presence of similar motifs that the various ancient Near Eastern royal apologies developed in some sort of linear fashion). Examining the rhetoric also fosters a certain cynicism. While transformative rhetoric necessarily occurs in situations where the questionable conduct occurred in the public sphere, such as the various coups or Hazeal's invasion of Samaria, one finds that the apologists

use reformatory rhetoric in most situations where it is possible. In other words, the ruler's involvement in misconduct is denied in almost every case where plausible deniability is an available option.² This is particularly true of murder cases, from Telipinu to David to Esarhaddon.³ It is possible that none of these rulers were involved in the convenient demises of their opponents, but always the circumstantial evidence gives one pause.

10.2.3 *The Sitz im Leben of Ancient Near Eastern Royal Apologies: Testing Tadmor's Hypothesis*

One goal of this study was to test Hayim Tadmor's widely held hypothesis about the motivating force behind ancient Near Eastern royal apologies. Tadmor wrote, "It is our contention that they were composed not so much to reflect apologetically upon the past but rather to serve certain imminent political aims in the present or some particular design for the future.... They were written, we shall attempt to show, in conjunction with the appointment of a successor – a crucial moment in the life of every king and especially of those whose own coming to the throne was not entirely in order" (1983, 37–38).⁴ I devoted the final section of each textual analysis in chapters 3–9 to the *Sitz im Leben* of the text, and I summarize the results below.

2. And, one might argue, in a few cases where the deniability is decidedly implausible.

3. Solomon remains an interesting exception here since his responsibility for the deaths of his enemies is never denied. This supplies further reason not to homogenize ancient Near Eastern royal apologies. Contrast the apologies of David and Solomon, for example. Although Joab and Benaiah committed nearly identical murders for the respective kings, eliminating rival claimants (Absalom and Adonijah, respectively) and their military support (Abner/Amasa and Joab himself, respectively), their roles in the defenses are different. In David's case Joab acted on his own and David was not at all involved; in Solomon's case Benaiah acted on his orders but the executions were justified on other grounds. If both David and Solomon were guilty as charged, Joab served as David's "fall guy" but Benaiah did nothing untoward. Without perfect knowledge of the past, we can only speculate on the truth of the various charges/defenses and the reasoning behind the apologists' rhetoric.

4. Tadmor accepts that the apologies of the Babylonian and Achaemenid rulers seem to have been written shortly after their accessions, but still intends his thesis to extend to royal apologies beyond Assyria: "Though our present argument has been devoted to the Neo-Assyrian apologies, the analogy between these and the similar historiographic documents from the 2nd millennium deserves comment" (1983, 54). He then connects his theory to the apologies of Telipinu, Hattusili III, David, and Solomon (1983, 54–56).

Table 13. The *Sitz im Leben* of Ancient Near Eastern Royal Apologies

Ruler	Date (when during the king's reign)	Purpose
Telipinu	??	Exclude other branches of the royal family from kingship and consolidate power for the monarchy
Hattusili	??	Justify Hattusili's claim to the throne and patronize the cult of Ishtar of Samuha
David	??	Justify David's claim to the throne; respond to disaffected Saulides?
Solomon	Early?	Defend Solomon's orders to put various political rivals to death
Hazael	830s? Early?	Legitimate Hazael's invasion of Samaria and commemorate his victory ^a
Esarhaddon	673 (IV?); Esarhaddon's eighth regnal year	Confirm Esarhaddon's legitimacy in light of recent defeat of Assyrian army in Egypt
Nabonidus	555; Nabonidus's first regnal year	Demonstrate Nabonidus's orthodoxy to his detractors in Babylon?

a. The Tel Dan Inscription is not an ideal text for inclusion in this summary because, as discussed in §7.4 and elsewhere, this text itself does not seem to have been composed primarily as an apology for Hazael. Instead, it contains reflexes of an apology. If I am correct about the Tel Dan Inscription being composed early in Hazael's reign, though, this does indicate that he disseminated apologetic rhetoric early in his reign, certainly long before he was concerned about his own succession.

The precise date of the composition and dissemination of several of the apologies is unknowable with our present data, and some would contest my conclusions about the purpose of certain apologies. But enough evidence exists to lay Tadmor's hypothesis to rest. Not a single apology is incontestably connected to the appointment of successors, and only that of Telipinu exhibits a connection with dynastic matters. As discussed in §8.4, I submit that Tadmor's connection of Esarhaddon's apology with the appointment of Assurbanipal as his successor is based largely on a misdating of the text.⁵ Most significantly, Tadmor's hypothesis works from the premise that the royal apology was a literary genre in the ancient Near East. He implies that kings commissioned apologies not based on any urgent rhetorical

5. See also Knapp forthcoming a. Tadmor's second prime example for linking apology with the appointment of successors is the Autobiography of Assurbanipal, but this is speculative. As Tadmor admits, we have no record of what—or when—Assurbanipal arranged for his own succession (1983, 51–52).

situation but at a given point in their reign, almost as a matter of course. Looking at the texts together we see no connection beyond the inherent apologetic purpose of defense and justification. This is as it should be; I contend that there was no one occasion at which kings were expected to commission apologies. It is feasible that many were commissioned during times of insecurity, when support for the king ebbed, fueling concerns about his legitimacy, but one cannot extrapolate the particular situation of one apology from knowing the circumstances that birthed another.

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When an ancient Near Eastern king ascended the throne in an irregular fashion—such as through usurpation or as a younger son selected over an elder brother—he often encountered charges of illegitimacy from his opponents. Kings combated such charges by commissioning apologies in which they defended themselves and upheld their legitimate right to rule. In this study Knapp provides a theoretical treatment of the concept of apologetic and establishes a much-needed definition of the term that incorporates both genre theory and historical scholarship. He examines the rhetoric of apologies in royal inscriptions from Hatti, Aram, Assyria, and Babylonia, drawing attention to recurring motifs, such as the king's divine election, the unworthiness of the royal predecessor, the king's military prowess, and more. Drawing on these comparative materials, Knapp detects apologetic elements in the biblical narratives about David and Solomon, both of whom ascended the throne in atypical fashion and undoubtedly had to address accusations of illegitimacy.

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